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INTRODUCTION OF IOWA INDIANS AT THE GRADE SCHOOL LEVEL

A Field Report

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Master of Science in Education

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by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

During the sum total of the investigator's experience as an elementary grade school teacher and administrator, she has found that there are serious gaps in juvenile texts leaving many questions about Indians unanswered to both pupil and teacher. The answer to these questions, the investigator believes, would be understandable and stimulating to grade school children.

I. PROBLEM

The problem for this study has been:

1. To enlarge greatly on the present information about Indians available at the elementary level.

2. To include human interest material that will catch the imagination of the student and arouse him to want to learn more about the subject.

3. To improve on the general presentation of the story of the Indians in Iowa and the United States so that considerably more readable, historically accurate material becomes available.

II. PROCEDURE

During the past year, the investigator searched for

information about Iowa Indians in many places. Still she has many questions. The following outline will show the procedure used by the investigator in making this study:

1. Libraries Consulted

   State Historical Society of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa

   Newberry Library in Chicago, Illinois

   State Department of History and Archives, Des Moines, Iowa

   Des Moines Public Library

   Cowles Library on Drake University Campus

2. Museums Visited

   Davenport Public Museum

   Mill Creek Display, Cherokee, Iowa

   Sanford Museum, Cherokee, Iowa

   Iowa Historical Indian Display, Des Moines, Iowa

3. Excursions Taken

   Effigy Mound Area, McGregor, Iowa

   Spirit Lake Massacre Monument, Arnolds Park, Iowa

   Mississippi Excursion with "Steamboat Bill"

   (Dr. William J. Peterson, University of Iowa, Iowa City, Iowa).

4. Indians Visited for Original Source Material

   Visited the Mesquakie Indian Reservation in Tama, Iowa

   Danced with the Indians during one dance of the Powwow.

Attended the music workshop on Drake campus the summer of 1959, to obtain latest possible material on Indian music.

Visited the Indians in New Mexico, so that a comparative study might be made.

5. Collected and edited material for presentation.

6. Correspondence

Wrote to many publishers and authors in regard to whether books the investigator used were still in print.

Wrote to publishers and authors for permission to reproduce material in this study.

The investigator has chosen to enrich the story of the Iowa Indians for the grade school boy and girl. This study is for the presentation to the elementary classroom teacher to save laborious hours seeking background information on a subject of vital interest to the elementary youngster, Iowa Indians. The material has been placed in chapters, with titles of the chapters on the level of maturity and interest of the elementary child. This study is not presented as an end in itself, but written simply to encourage further research. Much of the material available is now out of print.

III. AREAS EXPLORED BY THIS STUDY

The investigator has been encouraged by personnel of the administrative department of her school system, to contribute this material in her study, so that it might help narrow the gap in the juvenile texts that leave at the elementary level many questions about Iowa Indians unanswered to the pupil and teacher. The plan of this study is to have answered such questions as:

1. Where did the Indian come from?
2. What Indian tribes lived in Iowa?
3. Who were their famous leaders?
4. How did the Indian live?
5. What did the Indians do for fun?
6. Did the Iowa Indians ever go on the warpath?
7. Did the Indians have schools?
8. Were the Indians religious?
9. Did the Indians have government?
10. Was music a part of the Indian's life?
11. How did the Indian use sign language?
12. What did the Indian contribute to our world?
13. Are there many Indians in Iowa today?
14. Are they different from us?
15. How did the Indian travel?
16. What kind of clothes did the Indian wear? Does he wear the same kind today?
17. Did the Iowa Indians fall in love?

The elementary classroom teacher may use this study both as a research information and for source materials, although much of the past material is now out of print.

IV. IMPORTANCE OF THIS STUDY

This study is deemed important because authorities have advocated including a unit on Indians in the elementary social studies curriculum.

> The Indian background of our country occupies an important place in American history. Early settlers not only recognized and adopted Indian place names but also took over many important aspects of Indian life, including methods of hunting, raising and preparing food, preparing skins, clearing wooded land by ringing trees, making of fine baskets from grass, twigs, and bark, ingenious use of stone and wood, and making snowshoes, canoes, and other important functional objects.[1]

> The manner in which the Indian was driven back by the white settlers is not a savory subject but nevertheless one that should be known to children.[2]

Cutright, Clark, and Newell said:

> Here is a remarkable lesson which shows that one of the most valuable resources is the skill people have in using their resources. The lives of the plains Indians depended on the buffalo--for food, clothing, shelter, tools, and weapons. This makes it clear why the Indians fought desperately when strangers came and killed off buffalo to sell the

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[1]Ralph C. Preston, Teaching Social Studies in the Elementary School (New York: Rinehart & Co., Inc., 1950, p. 193.

[2]Ibid., p. 194.

hides and clear the land for farming and cattle raising.[1]

As stated in A Course of Study in Indian Life,[2] children learn that different tribes responded to nature and the environment by building different homes, eating different foods, and wearing different clothing, according to the materials that were most easily available.

Storms[3] stated that by studying Indian history pupils become familiar with a time and manner of living far different from our own--a time when there were no farms, stores, or houses such as we live in, and when every custom and habit of daily life was different from ours. Thus the children receive a background for placement of these Indians in their later study of local history.

Indians is a unit listed as an alternative unit in the Social Studies Guide for the Primary Grades[4] in the Des Moines schools. Under Basic understandings, it states: "The talents and abilities of the American Indian are worthy of respect."[5]

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[1]Prudence Cutright, Mae Knight Clark, Bernice Newell, Living Together Today and Yesterday (New York: Macmillan Co., 1958), p. 212.

[2]Francis Dearborn, Ernest Horn, Georgia Brown, A Course of Study in Indian Life (Iowa City: State University of Iowa, Extension Bulletin No. 143, 1926).

[3]Grace Storms, "The Study of Indian Life," Classroom Teacher (Chicago, 1929), Vol. 4, p. 509.

[4]Des Moines Public Schools. Social Studies Guide for the Primary Grades (August, 1950).

[5]Ibid., p. 85.

CHAPTER II

ORIGIN OF THE INDIAN

Where did the Indian come from? That was something people had all sorts of ideas about.

Some said: "The Indians came from the lost Continent of Atlantis which once lay where the Atlantic flows today."

Some said: "The Indians came from the Lost Continent of Mu which once lay where the Pacific flows today."

Some said: "They came from the South Sea Islands."

Some said: "From China."

Some said: "From Egypt."

"The Indians," others claimed, "are from the lost tribes of Israel."

"They are descendants of the Welsh."

"They are descended from the Vikings."

People argued and argued. But little by little, as they learned more and more, most of the scientists came to agree about it. "The one possible place the great mass of Indians could have come from," they said, "is Asia. They came from across the Bering Strait. At that point only fifty-six miles divide Asia from America. This distance is broken by three islands. Even on cloudy days you can look across and see land. Besides, in ancient days there may have been

a land bridge all the way."[1]

And so the crossing was made. From the Old World, for which they had no name--to the New, for which they had no name either.

Down across the frozen tundra; down through the cone-bearing forests; around the rivers; over the mountain; following the caribou, the straggly groups of Indians came.

The Indians gave names to the lakes, to the rivers, the mountains, the trees, the strange beasts. Whatever the thing looked like to them, by that name they called it. Sometimes the name stuck. Sometimes other groups of wanderers, coming after, called it by the same name.

Down in the Southern Plains they met the bison. That was the most important thing that happened to them. The bison was a beast made to fit all the Indians' needs. Gone now were the days of hunger. Gone were the days of cold. Here was plentiful meat, here was durable hide, long warm hair, bone, horn. The Indians followed the bison.

Why did they go any farther? Who would possibly be able to tell?

Some of the Indians moved on. Into the tropical-rain forests; across mountain-hung valleys; over grassy plains;

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[1]Anne Terry White, Prehistoric America (New York: Random House, 1951), p. 128.

down the cold, dreary land's end. Indians stood on Tierra del Fuego at the tip of South America and looked off into the Polar Sea. Indians stood in Alaska and looked off into the Arctic.[1]

All the New World was their home. But they had no name for it. Each group knew only the place where it had come to rest. Each knew nothing of the others. Each called itself "The People," or "The Real People," or "Our Own Folk." No man remembered where his ancestors came from. No man knew how far his ancestors had trekked. Why should or could he have known? It is impossible to remember back over thousands of years.

They didn't know much, these discoverers, going from the unremembered land into the unknown. They came bringing just two skills with them. They knew how to hunt, and they knew how to chip stone into weapons and tools. But they were ready to learn. They knew how to adapt themselves to desert and jungle, to forest and plain, to mountain and sea shore, to heat and cold, to drought and rain.[2]

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[1] Ibid., p. 130.

[2] Ibid., p. 132.

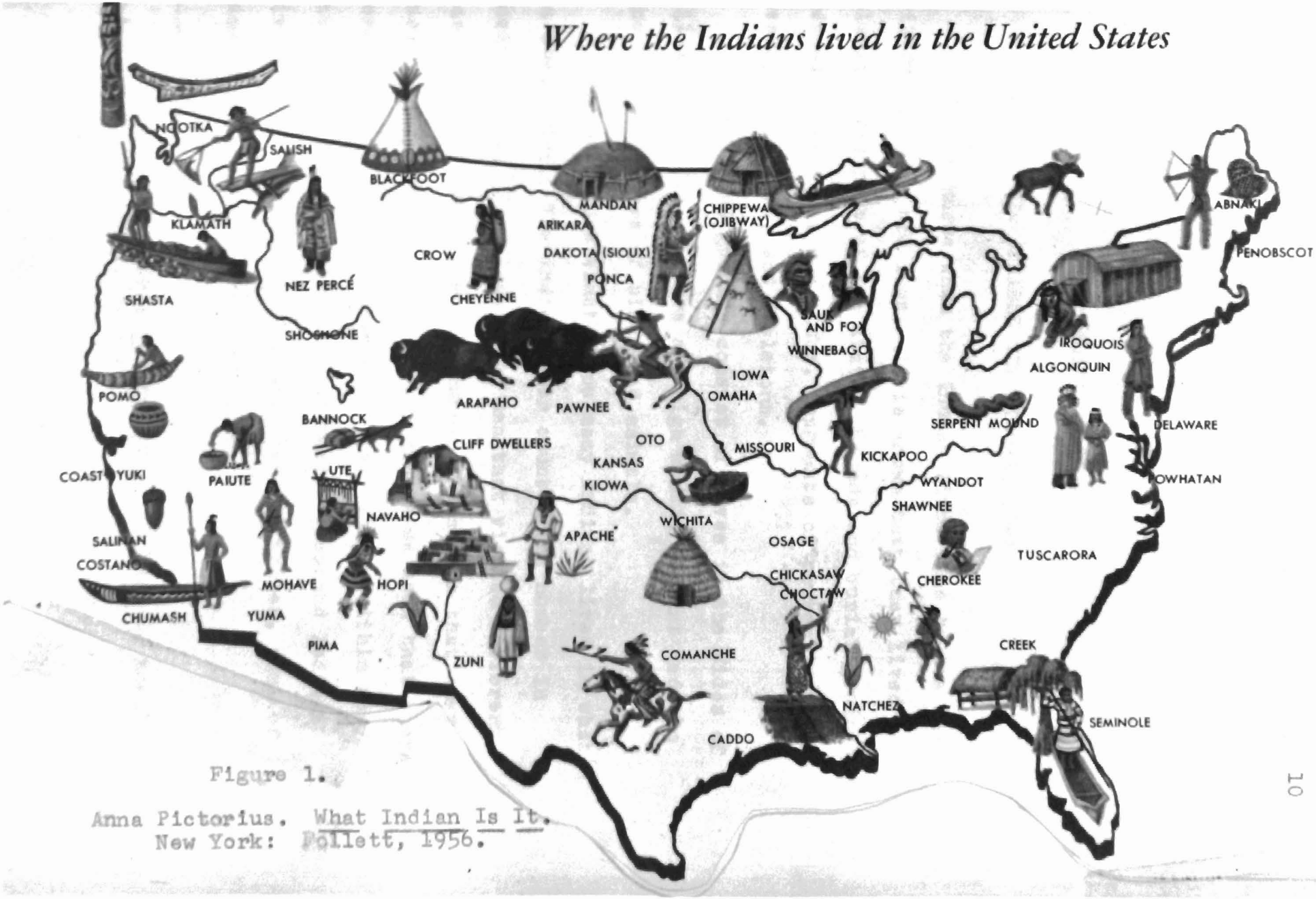

Figure 1.

Anna Pictorius. What Indian Is It. New York: Follett, 1956.

CHAPTER III

THE INDIAN IN IOWA

I. TRIBES SETTLING IN IOWA

No one knows when the Indian first came to the territory which is now Iowa. It is known that they lived in almost every part of the state. Mounds and burial grounds reveal stone axes, war clubs, fragments of pottery, arrowheads, spearheads, and skeletons.

The burial grounds consist of caves in the sides of hills and bluffs. Others are high mounds of dirt made in the various shapes of birds and animals.

No one knows exactly how many Indians lived in what is Iowa today. The Indian never counted the number in their tribes. The first white man that visited different parts of Iowa wrote down the number of Indians that they thought lived there. From these reports we know that there were not over fifteen thousand Indians living within our state. Probably between ten and twelve thousand Indians lived here. This number included several tribes, some of whom lived in Iowa but a short time.

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[1]Hubert L. Moeller, Hawkeye Tales (Hubert L. Moeller, Radcliff, Iowa, 1953), p. 27.

Iowa attracted many Indians for here they found a land with a climate they liked. The timber country contained much small game, whereas the rivers and lakes were full of fish. The plains of western Iowa had great herds of buffalo, which were a chief source of food for the Indian. No one knows for sure just when the Indian came but they came into Iowa from both the east and the west. From the east came the Algonquins, who liked timber for hunting and rivers for fishing and canoeing. From the west came the Sioux or Dakota, who were plains Indians and liked the open prairie with the buffalo.

Iowa was named after a tribe of once proud and powerful Indians. Over twenty different spellings have been given for the name Iowa. Many meanings have been given. Many say it means "beautiful land". If that is the meaning, it fits our state. Iowa is truly a beautiful land.[1]

The territory of which Iowa was a part was purchased by the United States in 1803. At the time of this purchase the following four groups were living in Iowa: the Saukes and Foxes along the Mississippi; the Ioways along the Des Moines River, near the center of the state; the Otoes, Omahas, and Missouri along the Missouri River; the Sioux in northern Iowa from the Big Sioux River to the Missouri River.

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[1] Ibid, pp. 9, 27.

Later the Pottawattamie Indians were given a new home in Southwestern Iowa. These Indians were moved to Iowa from a region around Lake Michigan, by the Federal Government. The government also brought the Winnebagoes from their home in Wisconsin and placed in what was called the Neutral Ground, between the Sauks and Foxes and the Sioux. Another tribe was found to have lived in Iowa at one time, known as the Mascoutens. These Indians lived for a time along the Mississippi at a point where the city of Muscatine now stands.

Saux and Fox. The Saux and Fox were of the Algonquin nation of Indians. The early white settlers pushed these Indians westward, as they were first contacted living near the Atlantic Ocean.

The Fox were constantly at war with the French and this warfare greatly reduced the tribe. During 1730 the Fox tribe joined with the Saux tribe and from this time on were always together.

Upon moving from the Atlantic coast area these two tribes moved to the Mississippi River area. They grew in number and power until they became one of the strongest tribes in the Mississippi valley.[1]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 23-26.

Sioux. The Sioux were a fierce warlike tribe and lived in an area from northern Iowa to the Rocky Mountains. The Sioux were divided into five fierce bands and were from Dakota nation of Indians.

The Sioux hunted and fought across all of northern Iowa. They had but few permanent settlements in Iowa. Historians apparently believe that the Sioux were the most powerful and treacherous tribe of Indians in the upper Mississippi valley.

The French came into contact with the Sioux as early as 1640, but were never friendly. The English made friends of the Sioux and used many Sioux warriors in the War of 1812.

Ioway. The Ioway Indians were brave warriors and good trappers. It was from this tribe that the state took its name. They lived in the Des Moines River valley, near the center of the state. These Indians had splendid bodies with broad shoulders. They were a powerful warlike tribe that belonged to the Sioux nation. They had been separated from the Sioux so long that they no longer considered themselves as belonging to that group.

War and sickness reduced this group to the extent that they did not play a major role in Iowa history in later years.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 27.

Pottawattamie. The Pottawattamie came into Iowa by order of the government, from their home near Lake Michigan. It was from this tribe that Pottawattamie County received its name. The Pottawattamie were a part of the Algonquin nation of Indians. They were a fine group of Indians, were capable warriors, had good manners, and were excellent traders. After living in Iowa only a few years they were moved by the government to Kansas.

Winnebago. The Winnebago were of Siouan origin and like the Pottawattamie did not live in Iowa long. When the Winnebago had to be moved from their Wisconsin home the government decided to put them on the Neutral Strip in Iowa between the fierce Sioux on one side and the warlike Sac and Fox on the other.

The Winnebago did not want to come to Iowa, as they were not a strong or warlike tribe. They feared that living between two fierce tribes they would soon all be killed.

The government, in order to protect the Winnebago, agreed to build Fort Atkinson on the Neutral Strip, supply it with soldiers and protect the Winnebago.

The Winnebago lived in Iowa for several years and liked it so well that in 1846 when the government ordered them to move, to Minnesota, it was necessary to bring out the troops to make them move.

For many years many of these Indians returned to Iowa to spend their summers.[1]

Omaha, Otoe, and Missouri. The Omaha, Otoe, and Missouri lived in western Iowa and eastern Nebraska. Indications are that these Indians were a mixed race. They were Siouan for the main part, but tribes of Algonquins stock held part of this territory. The Otoes and Missouri, along with the Ioway were, for the most part, of the Sioux nation. The Omaha were more closely related to the Osage group. Most of these Indians were from the woodlands, but in the course of their travels westward acquired the characteristics of the plains Indian. The Omaha tribe, in the seventeenth century, was located at the mouth of the Ohio River.

The Missouri and the Otoe were, at one time, one tribe. Due to a quarrel, between two chiefs, they separated with the Otoe moving farther up the river.

The story of the Missouri tribe is an unhappy tale. They were conquered time and again by the Osage and the Sac and Fox. They were also scourged by epidemic after epidemic of smallpox. The Missouri tribe finally disbursed, some going to live with the Ioway, but most of them joined with the Otoe.

The Otoe, wishing to be near the Omaha, moved to the

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[1] Ibid., p. 29.

Missouri River. Troubles fell upon them by the score. Their crops were destroyed by grasshoppers, traders introduced both whisky and smallpox. Soon they were but a remnant of their former strength.[1]

The Omaha, being unprotected from their old enemy, the Sioux, were soon reduced to scarcely more than one hundred families.

Mascoutens. Very little is written about this tribe. Originally these Indians lived in Michigan. This tribe at various times joined with other tribes; the Sauks, the Foxes, and the Kickapoo. The last report from this tribe was in 1779. After this the Mascoutens disappeared from history, the northern group having probably been absorbed by the Saux and Fox confederacy.

The Mascoutens, like the Kickapoo, bore a reputation for treachery and deceit, but like the Foxes appear to have been warlike and restless.

According to reports they worshipped the sun and thunder, but were not much given to religious rites and ceremonies.[2]

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[1]Frederick Webb Hodge, Hand Book of American Indians North of Mexico (Washington Government Printing Office, 1907, Part I), p. 119.

[2]Ibid., pp. 810-11.

Of all the Indians who once lived in Iowa none are here today except a small group of Mesquakie or Foxes who live on some three thousand acres of land in Tama County.[1]

II. IOWA INDIAN CHIEFS

This study revealed that each tribe had a leader or chief. Because of their good deeds, leadership, exploits, hate or quest for revenge, many of these Iowa chiefs became famous during our early history.

From the Sauks and Foxes tribes in the lower Mississippi valley came several famous chiefs such as, Black Hawk, Keokuk, Pashipaho, Powershiek, and Wappello.

Black Hawk. The name of this chief means "bird or sparrow hawk". A subordinate chief of the Sauk and Fox Indians and leader in the Black Hawk War of 1812. He was born at the Sauk village at the mouth of the Rock River in Illinois in 1767 and belonged to the Thunder gens of the Sauk tribe. When only fifteen years of age he distinguished himself in war; and before he was seventeen was leader of a war party of young braves.[2] Black Hawk was about five feet

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[1]Bruce E. Mahan and Ruth A. Gallaher, Stories of Iowa for Boys and Girls (The Macmillan Company, 1929), p. 84.

[2]Frederick Webb Hodge, Handbook of American Indians, Part I (Washington Government Printing Office, 1907), pp. 150, 151.

(From a lithographic copy of a painting by C. B. King)

Figure 2

Blackhawk

William J. Petersen, (ed.). Palimpsest. Vol. XXXVII. Iowa City: The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1957

eight inches in height, thin, and wiry.[1]

Keokuk. This name means "one who moves about alert". A Sauk leader, a member of the Fox clan, born on the Rock River in Illinois about 1780. He was not a chief by birth, but rose to the command of his people through marked ability, force of character, and oratorical power. Keokuk was tall and portly. He was fond of wearing good clothes and liked fine horses.[2] His mother is said to have been half French. At an early age he was a member of the Sauk council, which he graced, but at first played only a subordinate therein. He was continually involved in intrigue; standing always in the background, he secretly played one faction against another.

During the Black Hawk War Keokuk lost favor with his people because of his refusal to fight. But the one great occasion for which both the Sauk and the Fox honor Keokuk was when, in the city of Washington, in debate with the representatives of the Sioux and other tribes before government officials, he established the claim of the Saux and the Foxes to the territory, that is now Iowa.

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[1] Bruce E. Mahan and Ruth A. Gallaher, Stories of Iowa for Boys and Girls (The Macmillan Company, 1929), p. 126.

[2] Ibid., p. 126.

He died in 1848 in Kansas whither he had moved three years before. In 1883 the remains of Keokuk were removed from Kansas to Keokuk, Iowa, where they were reinterred in the city park and a monument erected over his grave by the citizens of the town. A bronze bust of Keokuk stands in the Capitol in Washington.[1]

Pashipaho. This name means "He touches lightly in passing". A prominent Sauk Chief, belonging to one of the fish clans, whose name is usually but improperly translated "Stabber". He was born about 1760 and first came into public notice when he signed, as principal chief of the Sauk, the treaty of St. Louis, Missouri, November 3, 1804. Little is known of Pashipaho's career as a warrior, but it is probable that he was highly regarded by his tribesmen as a fighting man, for it was under his leadership that the Iowa were defeated in a decisive battle of Des Moines River in May 1823 in which engagement Black Hawk was second in command. Mention is made of Pashipaho's presence with other Sauk and Fox chiefs in camp on Des Moines River in 1841, when news of a massacre of some of their people, by the Sioux, was received. Although Keokuk was present, and Pashipaho was then so old that he had to be aided in mounting his horse, the latter led

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[1]Hodge, op. cit., pp. 673, 674.

KEOKUK

Figure 3.

(From a daguerreotype taken in St. Louis in 1847
William J. Petersen, (ed.). Palimpsest. Vol. XXXVIII. Iowa City:
The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1957.

the pursuit of the marauders. It is probable that his death occurred not long thereafter, but little is known of his last years other than that he was much given to intemperate habits. He moved with his people to their reservation in Kansas.[1]

Poweshiek. The meaning of this name "He who shakes". A masculine proper name in the Bear clan, the ruling clan of the Foxes. Poweshiek was a Fox chief at the period of the Black Hawk war in 1832. It was he rather than Keokuk, to whom was due the weakening of Black Hawk's fighting power. The tie which held together the Sauk and the Fox had for some time been growing weak, and when Kwaskwamia, a subordinate Sauk chief, ceded away the Rock River country in Illinois, without the knowledge or consent of the rest of the people, Poweshiek with most of the Foxes withdrew from the others and crossed the Mississippi to the vicinity of the present Davenport, Iowa. When the fighting began they were joined by Keokuk and the fleeing Sauk, and later also by the defeated hostiles, to whom they gave protection. Poweshiek died in Kansas.[2]

Wapello. This name means "chief" and Wapello was head

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[1] Ibid., pp. 205, 206.

[2] Ibid., p. 299.

chief of the Fox tribe, born at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin, in 1787. His village was on the east side of the Mississippi, near the foot of Rock Island, and not far from Black Hawk's village. In 1816 it was one of the three principal settlements in the vicinity of Ft. Armstrong, Iowa, opposite the present Rock Island, Illinois. Although stout and short of stature, Wapello was of attractive appearance, owing partly to his kindly expression; he was peaceful and intelligent, and entertained friendly regard for the whites. Like Keokuk, and unlike Black Hawk, he was willing to abide by the terms of the treaty of 1804 which provided for the removal of the Indians to the west of the Mississippi, and in 1829 he quietly removed to Muscatine slough with his people, and later settled near the present Wapello, Louisa County, Iowa. Wapello was next in rank to Keokuk. He died while on a hunting trip near the present Ottumwa, Iowa, March 15, 1842.[1]

Mahaska. The meaning of this name is "white cloud". Mahaska was chief of the Ioway tribe of Indians. He became chief upon the death of his father, by a band of Sioux Indians. Mahaska looked like a chief. He was over six feet tall, strong and good looking. Whether at war against the enemies, or hunting buffalo on the prairie, or in the games

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[1] Ibid., pp. 911, 912.

Figure 4.

(From a lithographic copy of a painting by C. B. King)

Poweshiek

William J. Petersen, (ed.). Palimpsest. Vol. XXXVIII. Iowa City: The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1957.

(From a lithographic copy of a painting by C. B. King

Figure 5.

Wapello

William J. Petersen, (ed.). Palimpsest. Vol. XXXVIII. Iowa City: The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1957.

the young Indians enjoyed, Mahaska was a leader. He had already led his warriors in fully eighteen battles, and he had never been defeated.[1]

Mahaska, with the favorite of his seven wives, Rantchewaime, meaning "female flying pigeon", made a trip to Washington to see the President. When Rantchwaime returned to Iowa she told the women of her tribe how white women lived. While in Washington Mahaska sold some land the tribe owned to the government. He also promised the President that he would live in peace.

Following this trip to Washington Mahaska built a very large log house, such as the white man's, and decided to plant cornfields instead of going on the warpath.

One day while riding across the prairie, with her small son, Rantchewaime fell from her horse and was killed by the fall. Mahaska found them, his son alive but his wife dead, this making him very sad. He took his little son and the body of his beautiful wife to his home and prepared for her funeral.

Mahaska missed Rantchewaime very much, but he was a chief and had work to do and a son to raise. In 1825 he attended a council of Indians at Prairie du Chien and tried to persuade them to live in peace as he had promised the

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[1] Mahan and Gallaher, op. cit., pp. 110,111.

President he would do.

In 1833 a chief of the Ioways was killed by some Omaha Indians. His people tried to persuade Mahaska to lead a war party against the Omaha. He refused but some of the Ioway warriors formed a war party and killed six Omahas. General William Clark was sent to arrest the Ioways and because they had disobeyed him, Mahaska turned them over to the soldiers. Of course, these Indians were very angry and after their release from prison killed Mahaska, their chief.[1]

Sidominadota and Inkpadutah. These two Indians were brothers and both chiefs of an outlaw band of Sioux, have been called the worst chiefs that ever lived in Iowa.

A group of Sioux, because of their troublesome deeds, had been disowned by their own tribe. Their chief was Sidominadota. He had trouble with a white trader named Henry Lott, who sold whisky to the Indians and then stole their horses. Sidamindota drove him out of the Indian land. Two years later Lott and his stepson returned and murdered Sidominadota and his family. This has been given as one of the main reasons for the Spirit Lake Massacre.[2]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 110-15.

[2] Hubert L. Moeller, Hawkeye Tales (Hubert L. Moeller, Radcliff, Iowa, 1953), pp. 34, 35.

(From a lithographic copy of a painting by C. B. King

Figure 6.

Mahaska I

William J. Petersen, (ed.). Palimpsest. Vol. XXXVIII. Iowa City: The State Historical Society of Iowa, 1957.

Inkpadutah was the brother of Sidominadota, but a much worse Indian, and became the next chief of the outlaw Sioux. It was Inkpadutah, as chief, who carried out the Spirit Lake Massacre. The Indians were never really punished for these horrible crimes. Inkpadutah's two sons were killed by soldiers pursuing them, but the chief himself died at an old age in Canada, where he had fled.

Waneta. Another Sioux chief who lived in Iowa, was Waneta. He perhaps is the greatest of the Sioux. The name Waneta means "Charger". He enlisted with his father in the English service in the War of 1812. He fought valiantly, winning his name by his bravery in charging the Americans in the open and being seriously wounded. After the war he was given a Captain's commission and visited England.

He signed the treaty at Prairie du Chien, which set the boundaries of the Sioux territory. He died in 1848 at the mouth of the Warreconne River, in North Dakota.

Winneshiek. Winneshiek was perhaps the most noted Winnebago chief to live in Iowa. He was a brave fighter and fought against the white man many times, for he disliked them with a passion. The white soldier had forced him to move to Iowa and forced him to stay after he was here.

Waukon-Decorah. Another great Winnebago chief was Waukon-Decorah, who many times stopped his people from going

to war with the whites. Waukon-Decorah was more famous as an orator than a warrior. He had many friends among the whites and his influence with both the Indian and the white helped keep conditions on a friendly basis.[1]

Blackbird. From the tree tribes along the Missouri border—the Missouri, Otoe, and Omaha--perhaps the only one outstanding figure was Blackbird, Chief of the Omaha. The fame of his fearsomeness and cruelty endures to this day. He it was who poisoned the men who were threatening his power, first effectually sealing the lips of the agent from whom he had obtained the arsenic by giving him a dose while a guest at dinner. Depressed finally by his life of crime he died of hunger. He was buried seated on his favorite horse on a hill overlooking the Missouri River.[2]

Waubonsie, Billy Caldwell, Johnny Green, and Big Foot were Pottawattamie chiefs who lived in Iowa. The Pottawattamie's stay in Iowa was for such a short time they did not play much of a role in our Indian history.

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[1]Helen Wylie, "Omaha, Oto and Missouri," The Palimpsest, XXXVIII (February, 1957), p. 45.

[2]Ibid., p. 45.

CHAPTER IV

THE INDIANS AT WAR

The Indians recognized two kinds of warfare, to which they gave distinctive names: defensive warfare, or fighting for the protection of women and children, the home and the village; and aggressive war, or the going forth of expeditions to avenge injuries or to take spoils. The aim of warfare was to destroy, and as every person, old or young, was a part of the present or future strength of the enemy, neither age nor sex was spared and no non-combatants were recognized.[1]

War parties, however, were composed wholly of volunteers, and were organized solely for aggressive warfare.[2]

Mutilation of the dead was neither universal nor constant among the tribes, but the cutting off the head or taking the scalp was generally practiced. The fundamental reason for scalping has not yet been fully explained, but there is evidence to indicate that it was connected with the rites observed when a boy was recognized as a member of the band and his life was dedicated to the God of War.[3]

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[1] Frederick Webb Hodge, Hand Book of American Indians North of Mexico (Washington Government Printing Office, 1910, Part II), p. 94.

[2] Ibid., p. 915.

[3] Ibid., p. 914.

In defensive warfare the warriors sprang to the alarm and aimed to engage the enemy beyond the limits of the village, while the women hastily threw up breastworks or dug pits in which to thrust the children out of reach of the flying arrows. Women fought only at close range, using their knives or any available objects or weapons; but in rare cases women went to war and fought on equal terms with the men of the party.[1]

The Ioway tribe lived in the Des Moines River Valley. It was a powerful warlike tribe that belonged to the Sioux Nation. The destruction of the Ioway tribe is one of the sad stories of Iowa Indian history. The Sac and the Fox tribes were enemies of the Ioways and sent out a war party against them. Their spies, who went on ahead, found that the warriors of the Ioway tribe were watching a horse race two miles from their village. When the spies reported to Pashepaho, who was head chief of the Sac and the Fox tribes, he took the main group of his warriors and attacked the Ioway warriors who were watching the race. At the same time a smaller group of warriors, under Black Hawk, was sent to attack the women and children in the village.

The braves of the Ioway tribe were unarmed and

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[1] Ibid., p. 915.

completely surprised. Pashepaho's warriors killed most of them while Black Hawk and his warriors burned the village and killed nearly all the women and children. Only a few of the Ioway tribe escaped and the power and pride of its members were broken. Those who were left joined other tribes.[1]

In 1833, only nine years after Mahaska had visited Washington, a chief of the Ioway tribe was killed by the Omaha Indians. The Ioway's asked Mahaska to lead a war party against the men who had killed their chief, but Mahaska refused. Some of the Ioway warriors, however, killed six of the Omahas. When General William Clark, the "Red Head Chief," came to arrest the guilty Indians, Mahaska helped him, for he knew that the Indians had disobeyed both him and the Indian agent and deserved to be punished. Of course the Indians who had been arrested were very angry at Mahaska, and the next year, when they got out of prison, they killed him.[2]

Of all the stories of the Indians on the war path perhaps the Spirit Lake Massacre was the worst of all.

The winter of 1856-57 was one of the most severe ever known in Iowa for the Indians. It was even worse for the settlers.

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[1]Hubert L. Moeller, Hawkeye Tales (Huber Moeller, Radcliff, Iowa, 1953), pp. 27, 28.

[2]Bruce E. Mahan and Ruth Gallaher, Stories of Iowa for Boys and Girls (The Macmillan Co., 1929), p. 115.

Early in the spring of 1857, the outlaw band of Sioux, with Inkpadutah as chief, came to the region around the lakes. They camped near the Gardner cabin on March 7, 1857.[1]

Mr. Gardner believed the Indians were going to make trouble and prepared to fight. His wife begged him not to enrage the Indians, thinking they would soon go away. Mr. Gardner sent two young men to warn the other settlers around the lakes, but the Indians shot them before they reached another cabin.

The Indians demanded flour. As Mr. Gardner went to get it, they shot him. Then the Indians killed everyone in the cabin except Abbie Gardner, a fourteen year old girl, whom they took captive.

Soon afterward the Indians killed everyone living in the Mattack and Granger cabins nearby.

That night Abbie Gardner saw the Indians hold a war dance with the scalps of her family and friends fastened to long poles.[2]

The next day the Indians attacked the two remaining cabins on Lake Okoboji, taking Mrs. Thatcher and Mrs. Noble captives and killing everyone else. Later they attacked the lone cabin on Spirit Lake, taking Mrs. Marble captive and

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[1] Moeller, op. cit., p. 36.

[2] Ibid., p. 37.

killing her husband.

Altogether thirty-two people were killed. No Indians were killed. The Indians pretended to be friends and then shot the white men when they were not looking.

The Indians went to Springfield, Minnesota, eighteen miles from Spirit Lake.[1]

Then they moved on, getting farther away from the white settlements, for soldiers from Fort Ridgely were following them. Mrs. Thatcher became ill and the Indians threw her into the Big Sioux River and then clubbed and shot her to death as she tried to crawl out.

Spring came. Still the Indians went on, now with only three prisoners. One day two Indians who had been sent by an Indian agent came to the camp. They bought Mrs. Marble for a gun, many blankets, a keg of power and some Indian trinkets, and took her back to her friends.

Now there were only two prisoners. One night Roaring Cloud, a son of Inkpaduta, became angry because Mrs. Noble did not obey him and he killed her. So Abbie Gardner was left alone with the Indians. It was summer now and the Indians were far north. Some of the Indians there had never before seen a white person. They could not understand why Abbie's skin was so white.

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[1] Ibid., p. 37.

It was not long, however, before the Indian agent sent more Indians to buy the white girl. So the Indians sold Abbie for two horses, twelve blankets, two kegs of powder, twenty pounds of tobacco, thirty-two yards of blue cloth, some calico, ribbon, and other articles.[1]

Many clashes took place in Iowa between the Sioux and the Sauks and the Fox. War parties from one tribe or the other would dash into the country of their enemy, strike a sudden blow on some unsuspecting village or hunting party, and take as many scalps as they could. Then they would hurry back into their own country to escape from the enemy. One great battle between the Sioux and the Sauks and the Foxes took place on a bluff south of the present city of Dubuque. This bluff was nearly two hundred feet high and on the side next to the river was straight up and down. On this occasion the Sioux, outnumbered, fled to the top of this bluff, and threw up a pile of logs and brush for protection. The Sauks and the Foxes waited until night, then under the cover of the darkness crept up the hill. They set fire to the brush, and as the Sioux warriors were exposed by the light, shot them down. Then the Sauks and the Foxes, waving spears and tomahawks, rushed upon their foes. The Sioux overpowered

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[1]Mahan and Gallaher, op. cit., pp. 159-61.

Figure 7.

Indians At War

Robert Hofsinde. The Indian's Secret World. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1955.

and cut off from escape, were driven to the brink of the cliff. There they were beaten to death or hurled headlong on the rocks below.[1] Not one escaped.

In the spring of 1830, after the Sauks and Foxes had killed some Sioux rivals near the Cedar River in Iowa, Joseph M. Street, the Indian agent, asked both groups to come to Prairie du Chien and settle their quarrel. On the day the Sauks and Foxes planned to arrive, a Sioux war party went down the river about fifteen miles and lay in ambush. After sunset the Sauks and the Foxes arrived and prepared to camp for the night. While they were unloading their canoes the Sioux jumped to their feet and with a horrible yell fell upon their victims.[2] Only one brave and a boy escaped.

In 1831 a war party of Sauks and Foxes, eager for revenge, went up the Mississippi. From the bluffs opposite Prairie du Chien their spies saw a camp of Sioux almost under the guns of old Fort Crawford. Waiting until night, the Sauks and Foxes stripped themselves of everything except the girdles holding their tomahawks and scalping knives. Then they swam across the river. Steathily they crept up to the Sioux camp. While their enemies lay asleep they killed seventeen chiefs and braves, besides some women and children. Before the Sioux knew what had happened the Sauks and Foxes escaped, crossing the river, they leaped into their canoes

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[1] Ibid., pp. 118, 119. [2] Ibid., p. 122.

and returned to their village in Iowa.[1]

Sometimes the Sioux were victorious, at other times the Sauks and Foxes. And so the warfare continued. Sometimes trouble arose over stolen horses, and sometimes a lone Indian was caught by a band of the enemy and killed. More often the classes occurred when the trails of hunting parties happened to cross.[2]

Perhaps the greatest Indian war to be fought in Iowa was the Black Hawk War. This war was carried on chiefly between Indian and white. Chief Black Hawk, a subordinate chief of the Sauk and Fox Indians was the chief leader of the Black HawkWar of 1832.

By treaty of November 3, 1804, concluded at St. Louis, the Sauks and Foxes had agreed to surrender all their land on the east side of the Mississippi, but the land had been left undisturbed until the country was thrown open to settlement. Keokuk and the majority of his people, bowing to the inevitable, soon moved across the Mississippi into what is now Iowa, but Black Hawk declined to leave, maintaining that when he had signed the treaty of St. Louis, he had been deceived regarding its terms. At the same time Black Hawk entered into negotiations with the Winnebago, Pottawattamie, and Kickapoo to enlist them in concerted opposition to the

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[1] Ibid., pp. 119, 123. [2] Ibid., p. 123.

aggression of the white.[1]

By the spring of 1831 so much friction had taken place between the settlers and Indians that Governor Reynolds of Illinois, was induced to call out the militia. General Gains, desiring to avoid the expense of a demonstration, summoned Black Hawk and his friends to a convention at Fort Armstrong, but a violent scene followed and the convention came to nothing. On June fifteenth, the militia left their camp at Rushville and marched upon Black Hawk's village. Finding that Black Hawk and his people had effected their escape shortly before, they burned the lodges. Immediately afterward Gaines demanded that all the hostile warriors should present themselves for a peace talk, and on June thirtieth Black Hawk and twenty-seven of his followers signed a treaty with Governor Reynolds by which they agreed to abstain from further hostilities and retire to the farther side of the Mississippi.

During the following winter Black Hawk, like his great Shawnee predecessor, Tecumseh, sent emissaries in all directions to win various tribes to his interest, and is said to have endeavored, though unsuccessfully, to destroy the authority of his own head chief, Keokuk, or commit him to a war against the whites.[2]

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[1]Frederick Webb Hodge, Hand Book of American Indians North of Mexico (Washington Government Printing Office, 1907), pp. 150, 151.

[2]Ibid., p. 151.

On April 1, 1832, General Atkinson received orders to demand from the Sauk and Foxes the chief members of a band who had massacred some Menominee the year before. Arriving at the rapids of Des Moines River on the tenth, he found that Black Hawk had recrossed the Mississippi four days previously at the head of a band estimated at 2,000, of whom more than 500 were warriors. Again the militia were called out, while Atkinson sent word to warn the settlers, and collected all the regular troops available.[1]

Meantime Black Hawk proceeded up Rock River, expecting that he would be joined by the Winnebago and Pottawattmie, but only a few small bands responded. Regiments of militia were by this time pushing up in pursuit of him, but they were poorly disciplined and unused to Indian warfare, while jealousy existed among the commanders. Two brigades under Isaiah Stillman, which had pushed on in close pursuit, were met by three Indians bearing a flag of truce; but since other Indians showed themselves nearby, treachery was feared, and in the confusion one of the bearers of the flag was shot down.[2] A general but disorderly pursuit of the remainder ensued, when the pursuers were suddenly fallen upon by Black Hawk at the head of forty warriors and driven from the field, May 14, 1832, in a disgraceful rout. Black Hawk now let loose his followers against the frontier settlements, many of which were burned and their

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[1] Ibid., p. 151.

[2] Ibid., p. 152.

occupants slain, but although able to cut off small bands of Indians the militia and regulars were some time able to do little in retaliation.[1] On June twenty-fourth Black Hawk made an attack on Apple River fort, but was repulsed, and on the day following defeated Major Dement's battalion, though with heavy loss to his own side. On July twenty-first, however, while trying to cross to the west side of Wisconsin River, he was overtaken by volunteers under General James D. Henry and crushingly defeated with a loss of sixty-eight killed and many more wounded. With the remainder of his force he retreated to the Mississippi which he reached at the mouth of the Bad Axe River, and was about to cross when intercepted by the steamer, Warrior, which shelled his camp. The following day, August third, the pursuing troops under Atkinsons came up with his band and after a desperate struggle killed or drove into the river more than 150 while forty were captured. Most of those who reached the other side were subsequently cut off by the Sioux. Black Hawk and his principal warrior, Neapope, escaped, however, to the northward, whither they were followed and captured by some Winnebago.[2]

In order to avoid further trouble, the military authorities decided to take Black Hawk to an eastern prison. He made no protest other than to utter an impassioned speech of farewell to his tribe.

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[1] Ibid., p. 152.

[2] Ibid., p. 152.

It is not surprising that a warrior with this indomitable spirit should prove of great interest to the white men. He was taken to Fortress Monroe, Virginia, but confined there only a month--striking up a great friendship with the commander. Then he was taken, still as a prisoner of war, on a tour of the principal cities, where he made speeches on behalf of the Indians, and was given close attention. On his return west it was interesting to note that he made a truce with Keokuk, and even went with the latter on a special trip to Washington. Had he united in his own person the wisdom and eloquence of Keokuk, with his own bravery and skill in battle, the white man would have had a foe indeed.[1]

Black Hawk was released on parole and never again took up arms against the Americans. After his trip east with Keokuk he settled on the Des Moines River, where he met a peaceful end, October 3, 1838. He was given an imposing funeral, such as his vainglorious soul must have loved. His body was dressed in a uniform presented by General Andrew Jackson, with a sword from the same donor. In the other hand was a cane given him by Henry Clay. In life he had met defeat; but in death he was honored even by his enemies.[2]

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[1] J. Walker McSpadden, Indian Heroes (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1950), pp. 257, 258.

[2] Ibid., p. 259.

CHAPTER V

THE TREATIES OF THE INDIANS

On January 28, 1904, Congress passed a law setting aside enough money for the compiling and printing of all treaties then in the hands of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The government printing office in Washington printed the two volumes on Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties. This was compiled to December 1, 1902. According to this publication, the one and only authentic list, there were many treaties made between the Indian in Iowa and the Federal Government. Many of these treaties affected the Indian and ultimately moved him from our state.[1]

As white settlers began to come to Iowa the Indians again and again were compelled to bid farewell to their native villages and to move to new homes. Even before white settlers were allowed to live in Iowa, the Sauks and Foxes in 1824 gave up a triangular shaped region in what is now Lee County, for the half-breeds.[1]

A half-breed was a person, usually, whose father was white and whose mother was an Indian. The half-breeds ordinarily lived with the tribe of their mother. The Indians

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[1]Charles J. Kappler (ed), Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1904) Preface.

[2]Mahan and Gallaher, op. cit., p. 146.

were interested in them and in 1824 gave them this land for their home. White men soon traded or cheated them out of it.[1]

You have already learned how the Sioux and the Sauks and Foxes in 1830, each gave up a strip of land twenty miles wide in northeastern Iowa to the government to form a neutral area between them. At the same time the Indians in western Iowa gave up their claims to the Missouri slope.

Later the Winnebagoes were moved over from Wisconsin into the Neutral Ground, and the Pottawattamie's with some of their kinsmen, the Ottawas and Chippewas, were brought from Illinois to occupy the government-owned land in southwestern Iowa.

At the close of the Black Hawk War, in 1832, the Sauks and Foxes gave up a strip of land along the Mississippi River. This was about fifty miles wide and extended from the Neutral Ground on the north to Missouri on the south. A treaty council was held, at which the Indians agreed to give up their land, at the present site of Davenport. General Winfield Scott and Governor John Reynolds of Illinois represented the United States. Antoine LeClaire was the interpreter. The land secured from the Indians at this council was first called Scott's Purchase and later the Black Hawk Purchase.

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[1]Moeller, op. cit., p. 40.

So many white settlers moved into this strip that in 1837 the government made another purchase from the Sauks and Foxes. This tract lay west of the Black Hawk Purchase.

A year earlier, that is in 1836, the four hundred square miles on the Iowa River, known as Keokuk's Reserve, had been sold to the government. This was the tract that had been given to Keokuk and his band because they did not join Black Hawk in his war against the whites.[1]

The government obtained the land from the Indians by treaty councils, some held in Washington and others in the land of the Indians. The President sent delegates to represent the United States and the tribes were represented by their chiefs. In exchange for the land the government usually agreed to pay a certain amount of money to the Indians and to give them certain goods such as blankets, cloth, tobacco, powder, and salt. Sometimes, too, the government promised to build a blacksmith shop, to lay out farms, to establish a school, and to help move them to their new home.

The council of 1842, at which the Sauks and Foxes agreed to give up the rest of their land in Iowa, was held at Agency City about six miles east of the present city of Ottumwa. A large tent was erected for the ceremony. Captain

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[1]Mahan and Gallaher, op. cit., pp. 147, 149.

James Allen was there with a company of dragoons from Fort Des Moines to keep order. John Chambers, governor of the territory of Iowa, represented the United States. He was dressed in the showy uniform of a brigadier general to impress the Indians. During the council he occupied a seat on a raised platform at one end of the tent. Near him sat the interpreter, Antoine LeClaire, and some other white men. In front of the platform was a circular row of seats for the chiefs.[1]

The Indians wore their best blankets, gaily decorated with fantastic figures. Some had a headdress of red-dyed horse hair tied to the scalp lock. Others had feathers and fine plumage in their hair. Many wore jingling bracelets on their wrists and dangles or rings in their ears. They carried fancy war clubs and spears decorated with colored feathers. Fringed leggings and deerskin shirts ornamented with porcupine quills completed their costumes.

Governor Chambers made a speech, and the interpreter explained it to the Indians, sentence by sentence, as he went along. Then the chiefs replied, and Mr. LeClaire translated their words to the whites. The Indians told about the great green meadows of their Iowa home, and fine groves of

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[1] Ibid., pp. 149-150.

sycamore and walnut trees along the streams, and the beauty of the prairie flowers. No other land, they thought, could be so fine.

The Council lasted many days. At last, on October 11, 1842, the treaty was signed. The government agreed to pay the debts of the tribes to the traders and $40,000 a year for several years. For this amount the Sauks and Foxes promised to give up nearly one-third of the area of Iowa. The Indians agreed to vacate the land as far west as a line north and south through the Red Rocks of Marion County, by May 1, 1843. They promised also to give up the rest of the tract in 1845, and to move to Kansas.[1]

At the close of the council Governor Chambers advised the Indians to live at peace and to leave whisky alone. He told them that they should learn to work, as this would keep them out of trouble and enable them to have whatever they needed. The braves listened to this advice but didn't care much for it. The idea that they in their gay blankets and feathers should work like squaws sounded ridiculous.

In 1846 the government made a treaty with the Pottawattamies by which they agreed to move from Iowa to Kansas. During the same year the Winnebagoes promised to give up

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[1] Ibid., pp. 150, 151.

their home in the Neutral Ground for a new reservation in Minnesota. The Pottawattamies soon took up their march to Kansas, and the Winnebagoes, with an escort of mounted soldiers from Fort Atkinson, left for Minnesota in 1848. Only the Sioux remained.

In 1851 these Indians agreed to sell their land in northern Iowa to the government. In this way all of the prairies and hills and woodlands which the Indians once owned in Iowa passed into the possession of the white man.[1]

Actually the United States Government paid for Iowa land twice. The United States first paid France for it in 1803 and later bought it from the Indians.

We do not know exactly how much the government paid the Indians for Iowa land. Part was paid in cash while the rest was merchandise and food. Sometimes the government paid several tribes for the same land. Boundaries were not clearly marked. We know the amount paid was over $2,887,500.[2]

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[1] Ibid., pp. 151-53.

[2] Moeller, op. cit., p. 39.

CHAPTER VI

HOW THE INDIAN LIVED

I. THE INDIAN AT HOME

Before the Black Hawk War few white people lived in Iowa. Only Indians lived in the villages which the traveler found here and there on the prairie or in the timber by the lakes and rivers. There were no churches, no factories, and no school buildings in these Indian villages. There were only the tepees or wickiups of the Indians, the only paving was the prairie grass, the only lights were the camp fires.[1]

In the early days, when a Plains Indian baby was born, his grandmother was usually the first person to take care of him. She took the baby and rubbed him all over with warm, melted fat from a deer or from a buffalo cow. This was to make the baby's skin soft and smooth. It kept him clean, too, as soap does. Next the grandmother wrapped him in little, soft-tanned rabbit or squirrel skins, and then put him in his cradle.[2]

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[1]Bruce E. Mahan and Ruth A. Gallaher, Stories of Iowa for Boys and Girls (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1929), pp. 85.

[2]Alice Marriott, Indians on Horseback (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1949), p. 22.

Some Plains Indian tribes had two kinds of cradles. The first kind, into which the new baby was put, and where most babies slept all night until they were about two years old, was very simple. This cradle was just a tube of buffalo hide, not worked and rubbed, or tanned, to make it soft; but sun dried, so it would be stiff. Hide prepared this way was called rawhide. It had an unfinished surface that felt a little like blotting paper, and it took paints made of earth colors easily. The woman painted sharp-edged designs, like diamonds and triangles, on the cradles with blue and red and yellow earths.

The second kind of cradle was harder to make. First, the grandmother whittled out flat boards, of cedar wood. The whittling took a long time because the only tool the old lady had was a knife. When the boards were flat and smooth, the grandmother pointed their top ends and rounded off the bottom ones. Then the finished boards were about three and a half feet long, four inches wide, and half an inch thick.[1]

Next, the grandmother made a bag, or case, of soft-tanned deer hide. She bent a curved piece of buffalo rawhide across the top of the cradle, from one board to the other. Then she stretched the soft skin bag over the boards, and the rawhide. She tied the bag lightly at the bottom,

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[1] Ibid., pp. 23-24.

where the baby's feet would rest. She fastened the case to the back boards with rawhide strings. Last of all, she lined the case with small, soft skins and laid the baby inside. She covered him over with other soft little hides, instead of with sheets and blankets.

This was a good cradle. It made the baby safe, even if the cradle were accidentally dropped or fell when the mother was busy. No matter what the mother was doing, riding or walking or working, she could feel sure that her baby would not be easily hurt.

A Plains Indian child spent most of his first two years in his cradle. Several times a day the baby's mother or grandmother would take him out; wash him; and rub his legs and arms with fat to keep them clean and to make them grow straight and supple. Sometimes his father or grandfather would take the baby out of the cradle. Then he would hold the child on his lap, and let him stretch and kick and grow. But during all the hours when the grownups were busy, the baby was in his cradle, which hung from a tepee pole or tied to the horn of the mother's saddle. The baby would watch everything that went on around him and still be safe and out of the way. Often the baby was so comfortable and happy in his cradle that he cried when he was taken out of it. After the baby learned to walk, he was taught that the best place or at least the safest place to be was right in front of the

tepee doorway. He was taught to play there until he was about four years old.[1]

At the age of six, an Indian boy was given his first tiny bows and arrows, and a girl was given her first doll. The children played with their toys, but it was more than playing. A child was told that if he were old enough to have things of his own, he was old enough to take care of them and to use them in the right way. All the children tried to follow this good advice.

The most exciting thing that happened to a Plains Indian boy was his first buffalo hunt. He remembered it always, even after he got to be an old man.

Early in the morning, the camp announcers went about, calling out for all the men who wanted to go hunting to get food for their families to come to a certain tepee. The men came from their own tepees, each wearing nothing but a breechclout and a pair of mocassins. Buffalo hunting was hard work and clothes get in the men's way. Every man carried his bow and arrows, and had a strong, sharp knife tied to the belt that held up his breechclout.

When all the men were ready, the one who had been elected head of the game wardens for that hunt told them what

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[1] Ibid., p. 25.

they were to do. He told every man where to ride, and warned them all to keep quiet until they came to the buffalo herd. He was particularly careful to tell the young boys not to get excited; not to ride out ahead of the grown men; and not to yell. If anyone did such things, he might scare the buffalo away. Then he would be forbidden to hunt for a long time, until he learned better behavior.[1] The men and boys rode out of the camp just at dawn. The men rode bareback and the horses were unshod, so there were few sounds. When the hunters came to the buffalo herd, they stopped and sat still. Then the head of the game wardens brought his right hand up above his head and down straight to his side. That was the signal for the men to ride into the herd and start shooting. When the signal came, all the hunters kicked their horses forward into a gallop. The riders stretched out as far forward over their horses' heads as they could reach, and shot as hard and as fast as they knew how. Afterwards a man could tell which buffalo he had shot because his arrows were painted with his own design.[2]

The shooting was over very quickly. Almost as soon as the hunters charged, the buffalo ran away. Sometimes a buffalo that had been shot but not killed would charge at a

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[1] Ibid., p. 29.

[2] Ibid., p. 31.

man and try to kill him. Then the man would ride away if he could, but if he could not escape, all the hunters would try to shoot that one buffalo and save the man. Afterwards the hunters decided whose arrow had struck the animal first. If they couldn't agree, the game wardens divided the meat from the buffalo among the hunters whose arrows had hit it.[1]

The women followed when the men went hunting. When the shooting was over, the women came up with the pack horses, to help with skinning and cutting up the meat. The women helped with this sort of work because they knew what they wanted to use the buffalo hides for, and how to get them off best for that purpose.

When an Indian boy was fourteen, he went on his first war party. He did not take part in the fighting, but he would help with the camp chores and do a good job of watching how it was done, so that when he was old enough, he would know.

A Plains Indian boy did a very important thing, religiously, when he was about fourteen. He went out, all alone, to look for a spirit guardian who would help and protect him for the rest of his life. The boy went to a hill or mesa that was not too far from camp. There he stayed

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[1] Ibid., p. 32.

Figure 8.

Hunting Buffalo

William Moyers and David Cook. Famous Indian Tribes. New York: Random House, 1954

all alone, for four days and nights. During that time, the boy was not supposed to eat or drink, but to pray and wait for the spirit to come to him. Because these spirit visions were considered very sacred, the boys told them to no one, but kept their visions secret in their own hearts. Only very old men ever told about their visions.[1]

As the girls grew up they were taught the ways of a woman's life. They were taught all the things that a woman needed to know in order to take care of her family. Still the girls had a good time. They played games and enjoyed talking things over in groups.

The Indian woman cooked over the fire built on the dirt floor of the lodge or over a camp fire outside. Perhaps she boiled venison with corn and beans in a pot set among the coals. Another day she might have pork or fish, or perhaps she cooked one of the dogs. Sometimes the squaw rolled a fish or a piece of meat in clay or in leaves and baked it in the coals. For dessert, once in a while, the Indians had fresh strawberries, plums, grapes, crabapples, or maple sugar, but an Indian woman never baked a cake, or pie, or a pudding. She did not even bake bread such as ours.[2]

The Indians did not have three meals a day as we do. They ate whenever they were hungry and had food to eat. When

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[1] Ibid., p. 35.

[2] Mahan and Gallaher, op. cit., p. 87.

the meal was ready the man and his guests were served first. After they had finished the woman and children ate what was left. There were no chairs and tables. The family sat around the bowl or pot and dipped out the food with spoons, or took pieces of meat or fish in their hands.[1]

In the spring the squaws usually planted a garden. They had no horses and plows to turn the tough prairie sod. They did not even have sharp spades or hoes. With sharp pointed sticks or crude hoes made of shell or flat bone fastened to a handle, they planted corn, beans, and pumpkin melon, and squash seeds for food, and perhaps some gourd seeds for rattles and dippers.[2]

It was not until a young man had been on several hunts and had made his first raid, so he had proved that he could bring home buffalo and horses, that he could begin to think about getting married. Usually he thought things over for a long time before he made up his mind what girl he wanted to marry.

Then the young man went to his father and told him about it. If the father thought that it was all right, and that his son was old enough and wise enough to make his own home, he agreed. He gave his consent to his son marrying.

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[1] Ibid. (This refers to Mahan and Gallaher, p. 88).

[2] Ibid. (This refers to Mahan and Gallaher, p. 89).

A few days later, the boy's parents put on their best clothes and went to see the family of the girl their son had chosen. To show their respect for the girl and her people, the boy's parents took presents with them: horses, and tanned hides, and knives, and perhaps cloth that they had bought from the white traders. They did not mention their presents; they just tied the horses, loaded with the goods, outside the tepee door. Then the boy's family went inside and sat down and talked to the girl's parents. They said their son wished to marry the other family's daughter.[1]

When the young man's family had explained things and had gone home, the girl's parents told her about what had happened. Since she was sitting inside the tepee all the time, she naturally knew about it, but her family told her anyway. The girl did not have to marry the young man if she didn't want to. She could explain how she felt to her parents. Then they took the horses and the rest of the presents back to the young man's parents.

But if the young woman was pleased and said so, her family kept the gifts. Then the girl's parents began getting things ready to take to the young man's family. They chose the best things they owned to give away. When everything had been gathered together and loaded on horseback, the girl

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[1] Ibid., pp. 37-38.

dressed in her best clothes. Then with her family following her, she led the horses over to the young man's tepee. His mother and sisters came out to meet the bride, and take the horses she was leading. Then the boy's relatives led the bride inside their tepee, and from that time on she was a member of that family as well as her own.[1]

Making the first tepee for her new home was the most exciting thing for the young woman; as exciting as the first buffalo hunt was for a young man.

All the older women gathered at the tepee of the girl's mother. A woman who was a skilled cutter cut the buffalo hides into just the right pieces with her knife. Then all the women worked to sew the pieces of skin together and make the tepee cover.[2]

After that was finished, the older women gave the bride her presents. Because the tepee and all the things that went with it belonged to the woman of the family, they gave her woman's things: tepee poles, and gourd dippers, and buckets. They gave her willow-rod beds, with hides for bed-coverings, and painted rawhide cases to hold food and clothes that she wanted to store away.[3]

The older people were very much respected by the

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[1] Ibid., p. 39.

[2] Ibid., p. 40.

[3] Ibid., p. 41.

younger Plains Indians for their wisdom and good advice. When the time came for a man to die, he was greatly mourned by his family and friends. Perhaps his wife and children grieved for him so much that they gashed the skin of their arms and legs till the blood ran. Women often cut off their hair when they were in mourning for a loved one. For a year the whole family painted their faces with ashes instead of with earth colors. They wore old, ragged clothes. In respect of the dead, they never spoke his name again.[1]

II. THE INDIANS'S RELIGION

Nearly all Indians believed in a supreme, supernatural Being called by different names in different tribes. Such names as Wakonda, Tirawa, and Manito were well known. White men usually translated all such words, "Great Spirit." Of the highest concept of religion, ability to grasp the indefinite--such as the infinite and the eternal, the Indian had little appreciation.

The Indian relied upon oral narratives and drawings of his experiences. It is not surprising that there were numerous creation stories among the various tribes. The main points in these stories are similar. The Great Spirit

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[1] Ibid., p. 42.

created the world as an island in a great sea. This world was inherited by a race of giants, called Aiyamwoy, by monsters who dwelt under the sea, by great snakes, by fierce submarine panthers, and by the Thunder Birds, called Nenemikiwuk, who were the gods of war and of storms. Lightning was caused when the Thunderers blinked their eyes. Between these monsters there was constant warfare. The Nenemikiwuk preyed upon the serpents with thunderbolts. That is why snakes were not desired about the lodge, because lightning often strikes places where they lurk.[1]

Of the warfare between men and the evil creatures which lived in the world, there were many stories. There seems to be a common agreement that Grandmother Earth gave birth to a daughter and that this daughter became the mother of a son. The name given to this boy, who was also the son of the Great Spirit, varies, a common form being Wisaka. When this semi-divine youth grew to manhood he waged incessant war on the evil monsters. Again and again the monsters tried to kill Wisaka but succeeded only in slaying his younger brother who became the ruler of the land of the dead. Ice covered the earth, but Wisaka survived, together with the plants, animals, and men. The monsters likewise sent a flood

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[1]Ruth A. Gallaher, "Realm of the Spirit," The Palimpsest, Vol. XXXVIII, Iowa City, Iowa (February, 1957), pp. 82-83.

upon the earth, but again failed to destroy Wisaka. Finally, the evil powers decided to compromise with him and inducted him into the Medicine Lodge, giving to mankind long life and immorality. It was Wisaka, too, who brought fire and tobacco to man from the abode of the gods. Having taught people how to live, he withdrew to the North where he still lives; but some day, they say, he will return.

Around these events the Indians gradually developed a great many myths.[1] Some of them resemble our fairy tales, a favorite hero being some poor young man, who by the assistance of some supernatural power, is enabled to perform magic feats, such as supplying game in great abundance to a starving village. As a reward he marries the chief's daughter. Other stories have a more sinister implication. The chief character may be an evil spirit who goes about the world either in human form or in the guise of an animal. This puckish hero delights in performing tricks, most of which are malicious. A favorite device is tricking people into eating the flesh of their relatives. Sometimes these stories were of obscene character.

In many of these mythological tales, animals played an important part. Actually, the whole religious life of

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[1] Ibid., p. 84.

the Indians was strongly animistic. Like children, who see nothing unreasonable in Peter Rabbit and Brer Fox, the Indians believed that not only animals, but trees, rocks, the sun, rivers, mountains, and all other things were sentient beings.

The Indians believed that men could influence the spirits by fasting, by concentration of the mind or meditation, by sacrifices, by ceremonial rituals, and by incantations. An Indian boy was taught that he must fast until he secured a sign from the Great Spirit, usually in the form of a dream. Sacred bundles with magic objects were usually carried on the hunt or warpath, much as the Children of Israel carried the Ark of the Covenant. If the signs were unfavorable, a war party would return home, saying the "medicine was bad."[1]

Sacrifice might take the form of giving away personal belongings, self-mutilation, or the killing of a prisoner or an animal. During the winter of 1842-1843, for example, the Sac and the Fox Indians suffered extreme cold. They were told by their medicine man or prophet that they were being punished by the Great Spirit because they had sold their lands to the white people. To placate the offended deity, the Indians tied a live dog to a tree, leaving his legs free.

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[1] Ibid., p. 86.

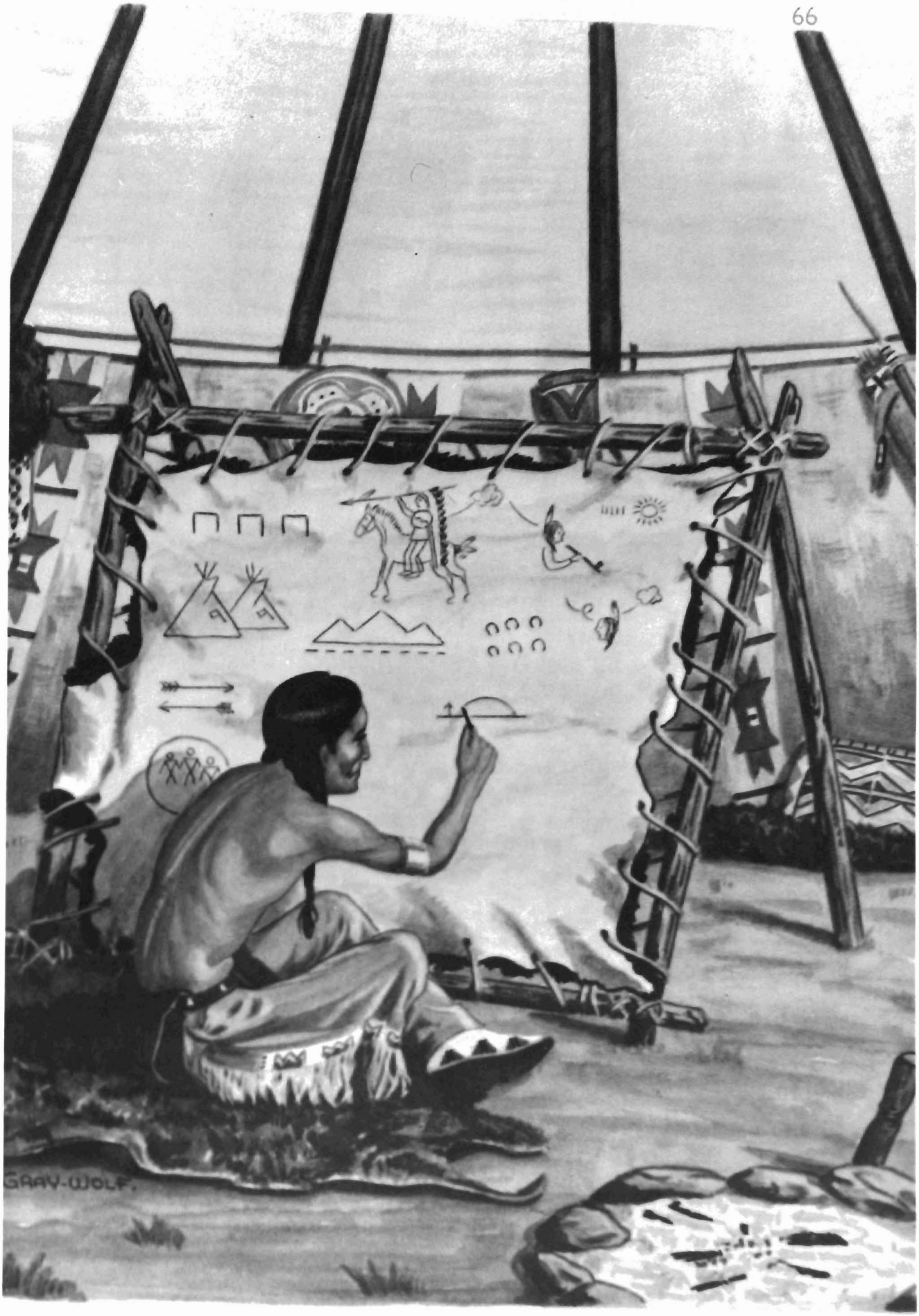

Figure 9.

Drawing an Experience on Buffalo Skin

Robert Hofsinde. The Indian's Secret World. New York: William Morrow and Co., 1955.

To the toe of each foot was suspended a medicine bag, and the poor dog was left to die and the body to waste away. Probably by that time the weather warmed up.

The Indians believed implicitly in a life after death, though their idea of the future existence never got beyond a land where game was plentiful. For certain favored individuals, such as the medicine men and the warriors, the Indians believed in the reincarnation of the spirit, although this might be in the form of an animal. The soul of a dead person was supposed to linger about the body for at least four days. Sometimes this period lasted until a person was adopted in the family to take the place of the dead.

Funeral ceremonies included a feast and the sacrifice of certain animals. A horse was sometimes killed, that it might bear the spirit to the happy hunting ground. Dogs were also sacrificed at the grave to accompany the spirit. Tobacco, the smoke of which was incense to the Great Spirit, was left at almost every grave. Some thought that little children could not find their way to the land of the dead and therefore their spirits remained where they were buried.[1]

The Indians had no written account of their religion. The stories were handed down by the old men and women. Special power dwelt in the "medicine men" who were at the same

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[1] Ibid., p. 87.

time, magicians, priests, teachers, and physicians. Women sometimes occupied this position. Such persons were envied, respected, and feared but were generally disliked by most of the Indians.

The religion of the Indians went very little into the field of morality as we know it. The social standards were simple: do good to the people in your tribe and especially those in your own clan. All others were to be treated as possible enemies--and there was no commandment to "love your enemies."[1]

The Mesquakie belong to the Fox tribe. They live near Tama, Iowa. They have a "lodge" or society the purpose of which is to "make men good." Rules forbid tobacco, gambling, or liquor in any form.

Religious ceremonies in most tribes are carried out by men. In the "lodge to make men good" the men sit in a circle around a sacred fire. They pass a gourd rattle from hand to hand. The first man sings a short, original song, shaking the rattle all the while, then passes the rattle to the next man who sings his song. This goes on all night.

The rattle, which was used in the "lodge" has a verse from the Bible etched on it. A tiny gold cross hangs from

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[1]Ibid., p. 87.

the handle. The service in the "lodge" is a combination of missionary teaching and the Old Indian custom of impromptu singing.

Hay-oh-inek, the "Mesquakie" song on pages seventy and seventy-one is a modern Indian song and does not represent the ancient religious ideas of the Indians before they came in contact with white people. The words literally mean, "Here He is named, here He is pointed out."[1]

III. INDIAN SIGN LANGUAGE

Sign language is used throughout the world in one way or another. We all use it every day of our lives. Nodding the head signifies "yes," as everyone knows; placing a finger over the closed lips means "hush," "don't say anything," and so on. These simple signs would not carry one very far if he were called upon to communicate with another who spoke a different language; so the Indian invented such a number of gestures that, regardless of whomever an Indian might meet, there could be carried on, without a spoken word, rapid conversation that any number of Indians could understand.

We use the word language loosely, for Webster states

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[1]Albert Gale with the Krones, Beatrice and Max, Songs and Stories of the American Indians (Chicago, Ill.: Neil A. Kjos Music Co., 1949), p. 45.

Hayoh Ineko

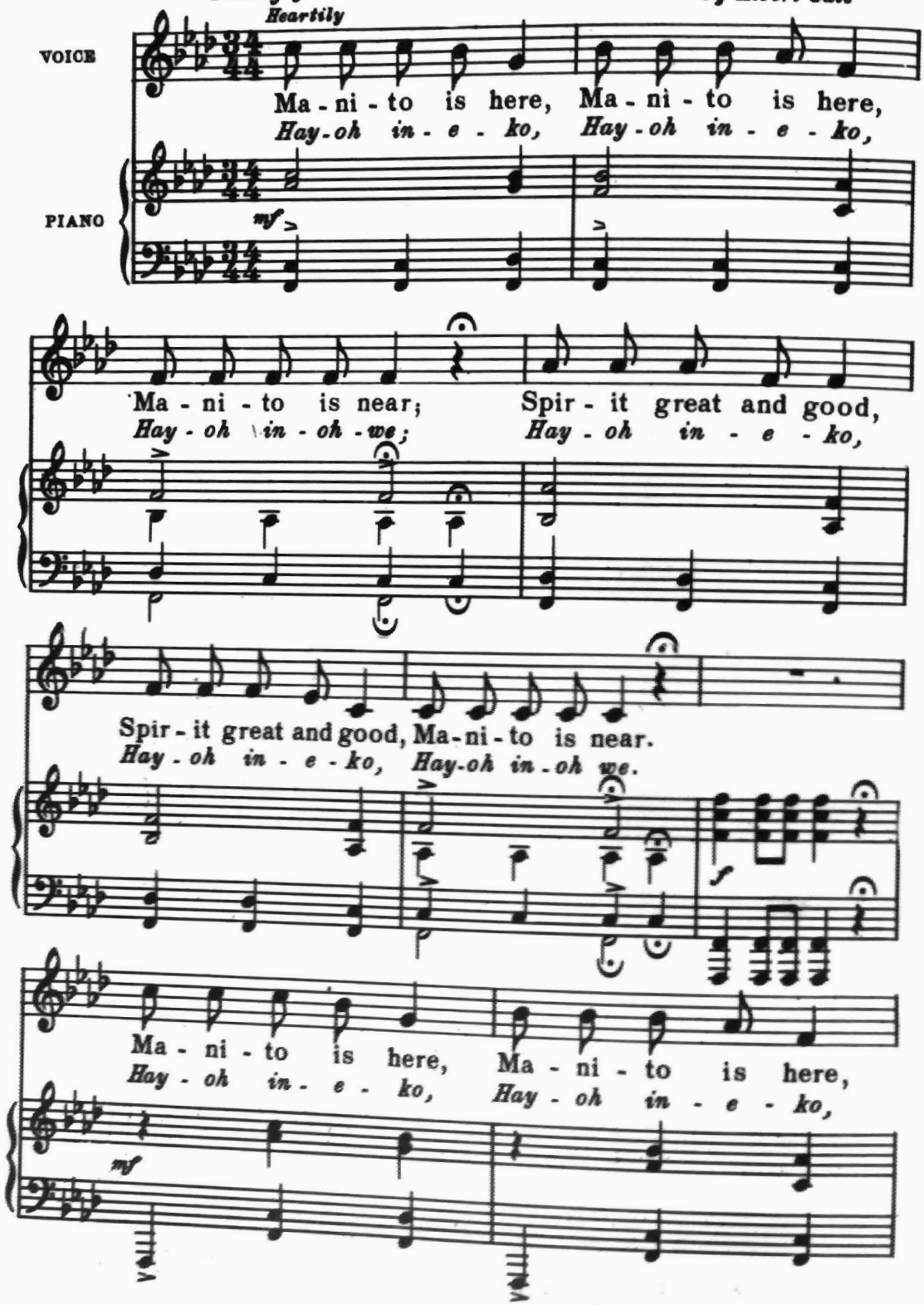
(God is here)

MUSQUAKIE

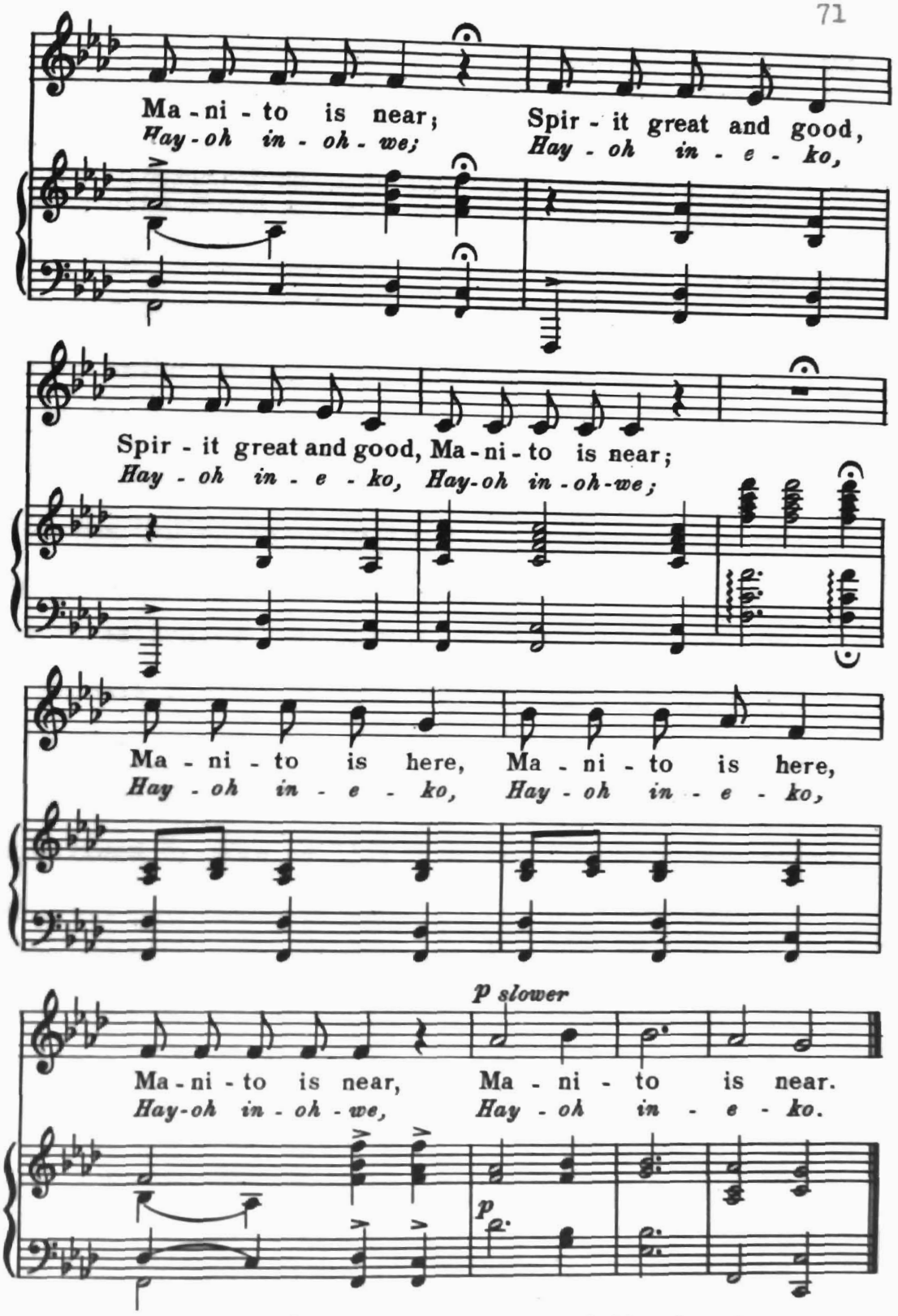
Recorded and harmonized by Albert Gale

Fairly fast (♩ = 120)

Heartily



Figures 10 and 11



Albert Gale. Songs and Stories of the American Indians. Chicago: Neil A. Kjos Music Co., 1949.

(Used by permission)

it to be:

> The body of words and methods of combining words used and understood by a considerable community, especially when fixed and elaborated by long usage.[1]

The term "sign language," should be called "communication by sign," for indeed, no spoken word is used. The entire conversation being carried on in various graceful hand gestures, that flows in a sure, even manner.

To express an idea, need, or desire by means of gestures with the hands, has been in practice since early primitive times. A very young baby sucks its hands to convey the idea that it is hungry. Today we convey meanings by signs, like arm signals when driving; a wave of the hand in greeting from a distance; the shaking of the fist when angry; whereas a system of hand signals is being used today by deaf mutes that was devised by Abbe de l'Epee of France in the eighteenth century.

Sign language was invented by necessity. In the early days, there were more than five hundred languages being spoken by some seventy distinct stocks or families of the American Indian. In California, with its many linguistic families, some tribes living as close as ten miles from one another, could not understand each other. Therefore, the hand system was devised as a natural method of communication with

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[1]Iron Eyes Cody, HOW Sign Talk in Pictures (Hollywood, California: Homer H. Boelter Lithography, 1952), p. 11.

each other.[1]

Just who invented the sign language is not known. The language reached its greatest development among the Plains Indians, who were constantly moving in search of buffalo herds and thereby met other tribes on the same quest. Hence sign language was their only means of communication.

The earliest reports in America on the use of sign language as a means of communication has been included in some of the early explorers' records beginning with the landing of Columbus in America.

The many Indian tribes experience little difficulty in understanding each other in the telling of stories of adventure, tales of heroic battle records, or requests for shelter and food.

The skill of any tribe in using sign language was necessarily determined by the extent of its use among them. Its knowledge was passed down from generation to generation by those individuals who were skilled in its use. Thus, it was only natural that it would undergo changes among the various tribes. The use of sign language was very valuable to warriors in battle. Various scouts could give signals over a great distance and thus assure a surprise raid on enemies.

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[1] Ibid., p. 12.

The hunter found it a valuable means of silent communication in the great open plains or the shady forests. A stalker of game could indicate to another just how many deer were sighted, or a party of buffalo hunters could be warned as to the right direction to take.

Great chiefs in council found this quiet means of communication would necessarily hold the complete attention of the listeners and thus assure understanding of messages given.

Today sign language is slowly passing on with the old timers, who still cling to their old ways in this modern age. They find it a great satisfaction to be able to carry on a conversation with each other over the present day noise. With the interest and help of the youth of today, perhaps this means of communication will be kept alive.[1]

The following are some common words and phrases of Indian sign talk arranged alphabetically as far as the letter D.

Ache. Push right index finger over the middle of the chest and work the finger up and down. Means the darting sensation of pain or sick.

Across. Hold the left hand out, palm down, then pass the right hand over the left with a curve-like motion.

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[1] Ibid., p. 14.

Afraid. Curve index fingers and pull in toward chest. Means pulling in your horns or shrink.

Alike. Point index and middle fingers of right hand in palm of left. Also means to resemble one.

All Gone. Hold both hands in front of body, brush palm of right hand upon left, move right hand outwards.

Alone. Hold right index finger to center of neck, then move finger outwards in a jerking motion of finger means alive.

Angry. Place closed right fist in middle of forehead, with thumb touching, and make a circular motion clockwise.

Antelope. Index finger and thumb of both hands are raised near the base of the ears.

Arise. Point index finger downward. Palm up and bring hand upwards.

Astonished. With right hand open, touch mouth and with left hand upraised pull in toward face slightly.

At. Hold left palm down and with right fingers strike back of left hand.

Bacon. Hold palm of left hand upright and with thumb and finger of right hand feel thickness of heel of hand.

Bad. Close fist over heart and make throwing motion by opening hand downward.

Beard. Hold grouped fingers extended down under chin.

Beautiful. Hold right hand in front of face, as if looking into a mirror, then make sign for good.

Big. Separate hands wide.

Blanket. Clutch fists of both hands at shoulders and pull in toward center of body, as if pulling blanket around body.

Book. Hold palms of hands together in front of body, then turn hands outward with little fingers touching.

Boy, Little. Hold index finger of right hand down low and bring up toward middle of waist. Means child growing up.

Brother. Extend index and middle fingers of right hand toward mouth. Means to nurse together. Then also make a sign for man, this is done by raising the right index finger in front of face and up to eye level.

Buffalo. Place thumbs of both hands in center of palm, curl fingers around thumbs, then hold slightly curved hands above ears. Means thick horns.

Called or Named. Left index finger pointing and with right hand closed, place by mouth, open fingers and push forward by pointing fingers.

Canoe. Clench both hands and make rowing motions to left. Sometimes right hand is held extended with fingers upward and shaped like the bow of a canoe and pushed forward. Both signs may be used at the same time. Also means boat.

Carry. Close fists over imaginary ends of bundle over shoulder.

Cartridge. Point index finger and touch thumb of last joint. Means length of shell. Then make the sign of shooting gun. Also means shell or gun.

Cat. Pinch end of the nose flat. This indicates the flat nose of a cat.

Chief. Open fingers of left hand upward in front of body, then pass index finger of right hand over extended left fingers. Five fingers represent men, the passing of finger over, means "Man over all, or Chief."

Church. Cross index finger or both hands up high above the eyes. Then place two index fingers touching each other like a spire.

Clouds. Hold hands above head with finger-tips touching each other, then make a slow moving motion.

Coffee. Hold left palm away from body and with clenched hand make a grinding motion, as is done with a coffee mill.

Dance. Extend hands upright, fingers apart, palms facing one another and move hands up and down three or four times. Fingers represent people, movements of hands their dancing.

Day. Extend both hands in horizontal position, cross over one another and then extend palms upward. Meaning night is finished and day is opening.

Daybreak. Hold two hands in front of body in horizontal position, one above the other, with about a quarter of an inch of space between them.

Deep. Hold palms of hands over one another below waist line, then pull the right palm upward.

Die. Hold extended left hand about the height of the heart, move index finger of right hand from left to right downward over left hand. Sign means going under.

Dog. Close fist with two fingers of right hand extended and apart, then make dragging motion. In early days, before the Spanish introduced the horse, dogs were used as beasts of burden pulling travois.

Drink. Cup right hand in front of mouth and make motion of drinking.

Dull. Hold left hand out, palm upwards with fingers rigid, then with butt of right hand hit left hand and drag slowly. Means dull knife cutting.[1]

IV. INDIAN GAMES AND AMUSEMENTS

Indian games may be divided into two general classes: games of chance and games of dexterity. Games of pure skill and calculation, such as chess, is entirely absent. The games of chance fall into one of two categories: (1) games

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[1]Ibid., p. 15-27.

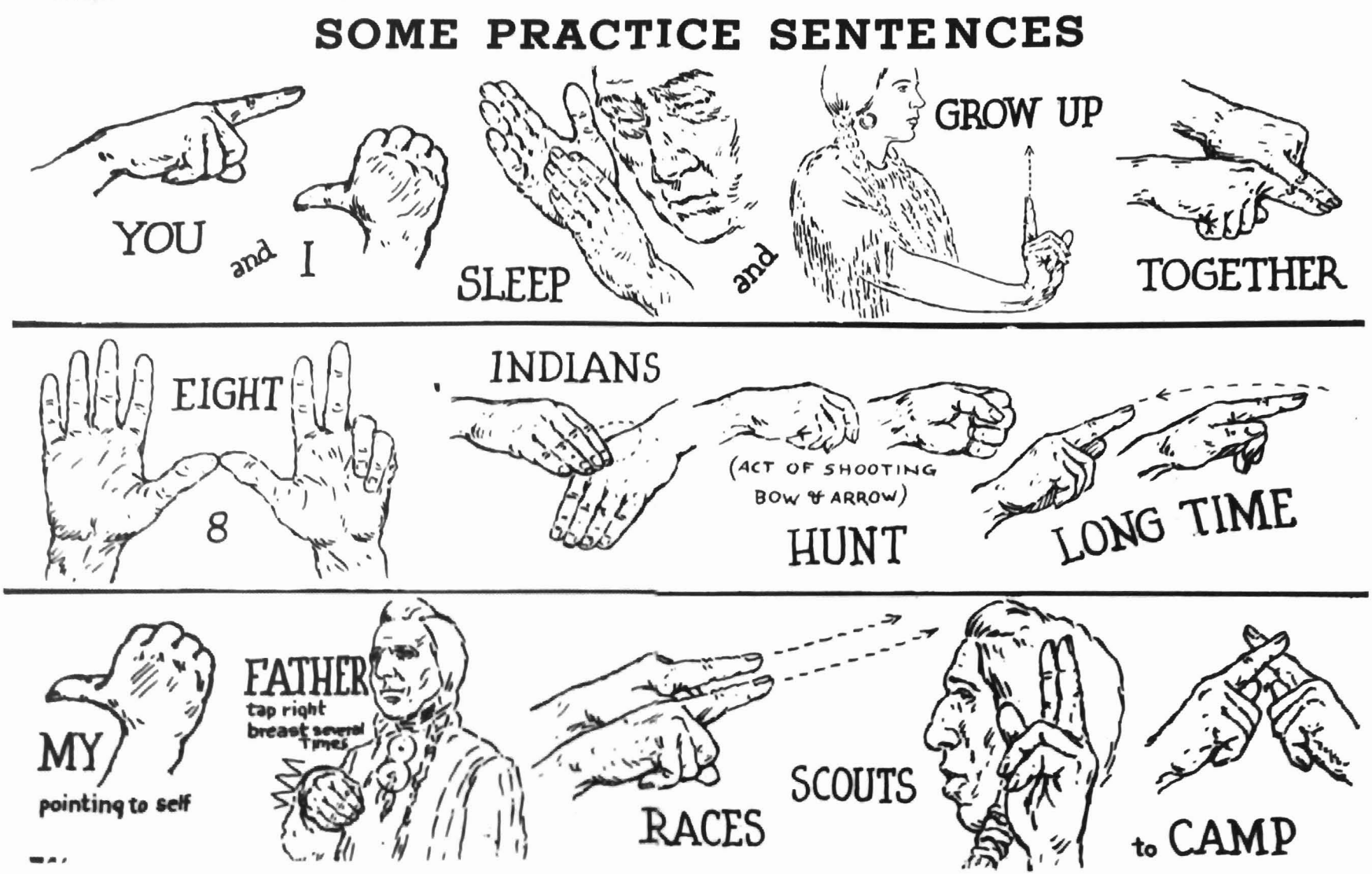

Figure 12

Iron Eyes Cody. How Sign Talk in Pictures. Hollywood; Homer H. Boelter Lithography, 1952

Count of ten: Hold upraised hands in front of body, palms outward, fingers outspread and slowly push away from body.

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3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

in which implements corresponding with dice are thrown at random to determine a number of numbers, the counts being kept by sticks, pebbles, etc., or upon an abacus counting board; (2) games in which one or more of the players guess in which of two or more places an odd or particularly marked counter is concealed, success or failure resulting in the gain or loss of counters. The games of dexterity may be designated as (1) archery in its various modifications; (2) a game of sliding javelins or darts upon the hard ground or ice; (3) a game of shooting at a moving target consisting of a netted hoop or ring; (4) the game of ball in several highly specialized forms; (5) the racing games, more or less interrelated and complicated with the ball games.[1] Games of all the classes designated have been found among all tribes of North America, and constitute the games, par excellence, of the Indians. Indian children have had a variety of other amusements such as top spinning, mimic fights, and similar imitative sports. They have liked target shooting, stilts, slings, and tops for the boys, and buckskin dolls and playing house for the girls, with "wolf" or "catcher," and various forfeit games, including a breath-holding test. Cat's-Cradles,

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[1]Frederick W. Hodge, (ed)., Handbook of American Indians North of Mexico, Part I (Washington Printing Office Bureau of American Ethnology, Bulletin 30, 1907), pp. 483,51.

or string figures, as well as shuttle-cocks and buzzes were common. There is no evidence that any of the games mentioned were ever imported into America; on the contrary, they appear to be the direct and natural outgrowth of aboriginal American institutions. They show no modification due to white influence other than the decay which characterizes all Indian institutions under existing conditions. It is probable that the wide dessemination of certain games, as the hand game, is a matter of comparatively recent date, due to wider and less restricted intercourse through the abolition of tribal wars. Playing cards is about the only game the Indians borrowed from the whites.[1]

Following are brief descriptions of the principal games played by the Iowa Indians:

Arrow Games. A variety of games was played with actual arrows. In one of the commonest, the arrow was tossed with the hand by one of the players and the others threw at it and endeavored to cause their arrows to fall across it.

Ball Games. The two common ball games which are widely distributed are racket ball, a man's game played with one or two netted bats or rackets, and shinny, commonly played by women. In addition, women had a game with a double or tied ball which was tossed with long slender rods. In all of

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[1] Ibid., p. 51.

[2] Ibid., p. 465.

these it was not permitted to touch the ball with the hands. The women in Iowa played with a small buckskin--covered ball of buffalo hair.

Bowl Game. A kind of dice game was widely played by the women. The dice consist of bone discs, or of peach or plum stones, which are tossed in a wooden bowl or a basket.

Cat's Cradle. The trick of weaving patterns with string upon the fingers.

Mocassin Game. Four mocassins are commonly used and a small object, such as a bullet, or a ball of buffalo hair, is hidden in one of them. The opposing side endeavors to guess where it is concealed. The game is counted with sticks.[1]

Tops. The top is almost universal as a child's plaything among the Indians of the United States. The common form is a whip top made of horn, bone, stone, or wood, spun on the ice or on a frozen ground.[2]

Guessing Game. This was really a time-passer by the Iowa Indians. This could be a good rainy-day activity for present day school children.. The cost would be low. Details are as follows:

Equipment: Eight sticks, each twelve inches long and one-fourth inch in diameter.

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[1] Ibid., p. 484.

[2] Ibid., p. 486.

India ink and a brush

Coping saw.

Pocketknife.

Preparation: There are two ways to make the eight sticks. The Indian way was to select eight fairly straight branches of the proper size, preferable willow. Then the Indian cut the ends of the sticks off straight and even, using either the knife or the coping saw. On each stick the Indian marked off five sections, using the dimensions two inches, three inches, two inches, three inches, and two inches. With the sharp blade of the knife, the Indian cut into the bark in a straight line around the stick at the points marked off. Four such cuts were made on each stick. The Indian held the knife blade on the stick, then rolled the stick away from him. This cut the bark through to the inner wood. After the cuts had been made, the Indian used the point of the blade to peel away the thin bark between the second area, then the fourth area. On the eighth stick he left the bark strip between the third area and peeled off the rest of the bark clear to the ends.

The white man's way of preparing the sticks is better if you live in a town or city where branches are hard to obtain. In this case, use dowel sticks, one-fourth inch thick by twelve inches long. Lumberyards have them in stock, and they are inexpensive.

With a pencil, mark off the same dimensions as the peeled sticks, and then paint the two-inch sections with India ink to take the place of the bark. This type of ink is suggested because it dries quickly and is waterproof. It will not rub off on your hands when you handle the sticks.

Two teams with four to eight on each side can play this game. They are seated on the ground so that the teams face each other, and a folded robe or blanket is placed between them.

One team holds the sticks. Hiding them under the blanket, two teammates divide the eight sticks into two bundles of four each. These two players then grasp the two bundles in such a manner that the painted ends are covered by their hands. They then hold out the bundles of sticks toward their opponents.

The object of the game is for the other team to guess in which of the two bundles the odd stick is hidden. As all eight sticks have a center marking, it is no easy trick.

If the rival team misses its guess, the first team gets one point. It shuffles the sticks again under the blanket, and the next two players grasp the bundles and hold them forward.

If, on the other hand, the opponents guess right, then it is their turn to hold the sticks, and the first team must guess.

Each team may keep its own score, or a scorekeeper may be appointed. The scorekeeper sits between the teams, at one end of the folded blanket.

Colored toothpicks can be used for keeping score. One team is indicated by red, and the other by green toothpicks. The scorekeeper holds twenty of each color. When a member of a team guesses correctly, the scorekeeper places a toothpick belonging to that team in front of him. The members of each team take turns guessing. The team whose twenty toothpicks are first used up is the winning team.[1]

The Indians had a good time in Iowa, and why shouldn't they? Nature was kind to them here. There was an abundance of game in the woods and on the prairies, while the lakes and streams furnished a plentiful supply of fish. Wild plums, crabapples, and wild grapes were found in the thickets. Hickory nuts, walnuts, and hazelnuts could be had for the picking. The rich soil of the beautiful Iowa country made it possible to raise flourishing gardens and fields of corn without much trouble to the Indian. Summer was the season which the red men liked the best. Then all the Indian women, men, and children had great fun. This was the time for war, for feasting, and for making love.

Dancing was as characteristic of the Indians as of

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[1]Robert Hofsinde, Indian Games and Crafts (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1957), pp. 9-14.

other people. Sometimes they danced in the evening merely to entertain one another, but more often they danced as a part of their religion or social ceremonies.

Although games and dancing made up no small share of the amusements of the Indian, story telling, too, was a favorite pastime. Chiefs, warriors, and medicine men all had wonderful tales to tell. The story might be of some brave deed, or of some long ago event in the history of the tribe. It might be about the sun, or the moon, or the stars, or about animals or trees. These stories were handed down from father to son, and told over and over again so they were never forgotten by a tribe.

V. INDIAN MUSIC AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS

Have you ever had the thrilling experience of dancing with the Indians? If not, perhaps you have seen the Boy Scout troop called the Mitigwa Dancers reveal to you many of the Indian dances. Many of us still consider the music of the American Indian as quite a strange sounding novelty, full of whoops and yells, monotonous drum beats and unintelligible words. But try to understand it from an Indian's point of view. The American Indian is a part of a race wherein we find all the dignity of ancient civilization and culture. Certainly, he is an aristocrat among the primitives and we must try to realize his position in modern life. Truly, too

his is a sensitive, poetic and reserved nature, regardless of an obvious love for showmanship, the dramatic or the spectacular. For a moment, let us forget the feathered regalia of which we so often visualize when we think of the Indian. These feathers and glamour of pageantry often obscure the fine points of his ordinary life and thought.

Indians are different from us in only a few ways. They do, however, have an intense spiritual understanding that is a part of daily living and this understanding, plus a broad philosophy and a sincere attitude about life and living things, is deep-rooted and is an integral part of the culture of this ancient race.[1]

Songs play a vital part in this daily living and experience and we must remember that music is a key to the Indian's culture and that there was little in his life without song.

Most of the Indian's songs were purposeful. There was always a reason for doing things in Indian life. The music and the association with the songs in tribal life are more the beliefs and experiences of the old days. Today, only the old men remember. They are full of wisdom, full of power brought to them through songs and the ceremonial life.

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[1]Charles Hofman, (ed), War Whoops and Medicine Songs (Boston, Mass.: Boston Music Co., 1952), p. 6.

When the Indian sang, he often expected some kind of result, too. In his life he needed songs for hunting, for rain, and sunshine for crops, songs for victory in battle, for success in anything he undertook to do. There were certain songs for the seasons of the year, songs for ancestors, honor songs for a great chief or mighty warrior. In these songs, the words were the most important, and the association connected with the song emphasized the fact and made the song a source of power. The sick could be healed, the rain would fall, hunting would be good, all because the Indian shared a mysterious power with all created things. He had a personal contact through song and ritual.[1]

Certain songs came about because of the Indian's belief in a universal indwelling spirit. With this knowledge of the Indian's belief, we can realize that nothing was supernatural to him, nothing too strange for him to explain by means of this mysterious power he felt he shared with all created things.

In the old days every Indian song was an inspiration, not a creation of man according to rule and precept, as are our composed songs today. The old Indians said they received their songs in a dream from a particular strong bird or animal, therefore the songs were connected with magic or

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[1] Ibid., p. 6.

some supernatural power. Consequently, in the Indians's mind, the term dream meant any result so great that it could not have been attained in human power. The sharing of this mysterious power is what made it so important.

Melodies in Indian songs are simple. They begin high in the scale, descend, and end low. In many of the songs, the last note is the lowest. The Indian knew no such regularity as strict time measurement as in our music today. He instinctively changes his time, and accents the song according to his feelings about it. He sings a song in one measure of time while the drums are pounding rhythms in an entirely different time measurement. The test of such a performance is in the Indian's ability to repeat it exactly. One contributing factor to his being able to do this is the fact that they never depend upon tuned instruments or written musical notation.[1] Lack of these two factors, deemed so important in our music, makes it possible to retain this traditional material orally and accurately.

The Mitigwa Dancers no doubt have heard their Indian songs many times, felt and absorbed them until they became a part of their thought and expression. When we hear the Indian sing or the Mitigwa Dancers dance and sing, we can appreciate the variety of tunes, the unique rhythms, and their

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[1] Ibid., p. 7.

full significance and association with the Indian life. When we sense this properly through listening, through singing, and through knowing, we will realize that music is indeed a key to understanding the cultural ideas of the American Indian.

The Indian people have lullabies for their babies, too. The melodies, with their appropriate words, are just as soothing and comforting as ones we have had sung when we were very small. In most Indian tribes there are many songs for children. Many of these songs are personal and have no actual accompaniment.[1]

The short bone or wooden whistle was usually associated with Indian doctors when treating the sick; with magicians when giving exhibitions of their power; or with warriors and war societies. Indian people who saw or took part in the Sun Dance, last held in 1878, described the time when the Oglala Sioux danced from rising sun until sunset, when two gashes were cut in the breast and a cord of senew, fastened to a stick, was tied through the gashes, and how they danced looking at the sun all day without water. It represented to the Sioux Indian people the deepest religious feeling. However, the physical suffering created an unpleasant impression

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[1] Ibid., p. 10.

and it was finally discontinued by the government. These acts of self-torture were done in fulfillment of vows made in time of great danger or distress. This dance, typical of the Plains area, is probably the greatest religious festival of many of these tribes and is also known as the Sun-Gazing Dance, the Thirsting Dance, or the Medicine Dance, or even the Sacrifice Dance.

We have long heard of the importance of the medicine man in the life of an American Indian tribe. His power was used to benefit those about him, and songs as well as medicinal herbs were important equipment in such a service. The rattle, the medicine whistle, the sacred bundle, together with the herbs, are all a part of the medicine man's property.[1]

Considering that the medicine man's songs were a gift of mysterious power, the Indian knew these songs would benefit them. He might restore the sick to health, bring the crops to grow, or locate the enemy for the proper time to attack. He might use a song so that the game would come toward him when he was hunting. These dream songs were the personal songs of those who had sole right to sing them on whatever occasion they were intended. No other person could sing them without payment; for without proper payment, certain powers would be lost.

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[1] Ibid., p. 20.

With the short and simple melodies, the Indian must have a strong reinforcement of rhythmical accompaniment. The drum is the most valuable instrument in connection with his songs and dances. Most Indians cannot sing without it and consequently they have a great variety of drums. In some tribes there are a few special instruments, such as the vertical flute made of cane, bamboo, or of metal, or whatever material the Indian happened to have on hand. Whistles are widely used and are played by medicine men or women. There are various sizes and types, from the high shrill whistle, made from the wingbone of a bird, to the long wooden whistles used in certain dances of the plains. Other than these few types, most of the instruments are rhythmical devices--members of the percussion family. Some form of rattle is found among all Indian tribes, although there is a variance of sizes and shapes. Among primitive peoples the rattle has a magic significance and among the Plains tribes it is considered very sacred. Gourds, containing seeds or shells, are most popular types of rattle.[1]

VI. POWWOW TIME

The signs and handbill advertisements were telling the people that the Powwow was coming again that August.

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[1] Ibid., p. 8.

Each year as the "leaf-falling" moon approaches, the throb of the tom-tom and the chant of the Indian echoes out over Iowa. If you go west along the Lincoln Highway from Tama, Iowa, you will find the Indians having their Powwow this August. The red men convene in full regalia to perform tribal dances and ceremony for visitors.

August, 1960, will mark the forty-fifth annual Powwow of the Mesquakie on their Sauk and Fox reservation near Tama, and all the people will be welcomed to one of the most colorful events in the state.

The investigator heard the people say, "This Indian music is more noise than anything else! Do they have only one tune?" It's been said hundreds of times and a remark like that seems to be the most spontaneous, but blighting, reaction. It is an easy thing to say because most of us do not have the opportunity to hear the Indians sing. If we could hear the Indians sing, we would find that many of the songs do have a general resemblance. But the more we listened, the more easily we were able to distinguish one tune from another. It is not uncommon that a good singer among the tribe would know several hundred different songs of his people.

To the Indian, powwow time is far more than dancing, costume, and tribal dancing. It is their own aboriginal combination of homecoming, fiesta, convention, and social

event. They use this opportunity to give visitors an insight into their native arts, ceremonies, dances, songs, games, costumes, music, and oratory. It gives them a chance too, to relive days of a happy, bygone era--and to enjoy themselves tremendously.

The present site of the powwow is on a plot of ground known to the Indians as the "Old Battleground." On this spot in 1839, according to Indian tradition, a roving band of Sioux warriors surprised the sleeping Mesquakie, after establishing their positions during the night with owl and wolf calls. The Sioux attacked at dawn, and the battle continued until mid-morning before they were chased away. Fourteen Mesquakie were killed as a result of the onslaught, but they fought back bravely and brought down ten Sioux before routing the invaders.

There is only one Mesquakie woman permitted to join in the war dance in which only braves who had killed an enemy in combat could participate. This woman was Jim Poweshiek's grandmother. When the Sioux retreated, one of their warriors was left behind because he had a bad knee wound. This grandmother grabbed an axe, rushed at him, and killed the Sioux brave.[1]

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[1]Dick Spencer, III, "Powwow Time", The Palimpsest, Vol. XXVIII, (August, 1957), p. 316.

The name Poweshiek, which means "Shedding Bear," has an important role in Iowa history. The Poweshieks are descendants of the great chief who signed peace treaties and pacts for sale of lands with the federal government in 1824, 1837, and 1842. Poweshiek County is named for Chief Poweshiek, Old Jim's great-grandfather.

Before 1913 the Mesquakie Indians had met annually in what became known as "field days." These were more or less spontaneous affairs, where the Indians assembled for games, dancing, contests, and a general social gathering. The near-by white people found these field days to be both entertaining and interesting, and started attending in increasing numbers. Chief Pushetonikwa had the foresight to give this celebration some organization and planning in order for it to grow in the right direction and accomplish some purpose.[1]

Two white men were prominent in assisting the Indians in their early powwows. Joe Svacina, proprietor of a harness shop in Tama, devoted almost thirty years to helping the Mesquakie in this project. Called Wa-bi-ke-tiwah (White Eagle) by the grateful Indians, Mr. Svacina was a close friend of Chief Pushetonikwa until the "last government-recognized chief" died in 1919. As the scope of the Mesquakie

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[1] Ibid., p. 319.

powwow continued to grow, it was Mr. Svacina who guided and directed the Indians in their business adventure.

Edgar R. Harlan, curator of the Historical Department of Iowa, located in Des Moines, began to visit and get acquainted with the Mesquakie in 1917. In 1919 he was called upon by the powwow committee to assist them in promoting the event. The Indians gave Mr. Harlan the name Me-shi-ke, meaning Turtle.

The powwow steadily grew until it was a week-long affair in 1922. Soon the Indians realized they must have a close-knit organization, and great strides were taken in that direction. A powwow association was formed, officers were chosen, and various jobs were divided. The newly formed powwow association set about to write up a constitution and a statement of purpose, which they did very well. The constitution still stands today, unhampered and unaltered by amendments.

The Indian men did the wild, frenzied, and inspired dances, while the women danced about more slowly and rhythmically, confining all intricate movement to their mocassined feet.

To preserve the tribal dances, the Mesquakie choose a Chief Dancer, whose duty it is to memorize all the intricate steps and movements of the many dances. Included in the repertoire currently are such dances as the friendship, squaw,

Shawnee, snake, pipe, bear, buffalo, shield, rabbit, swan, bean, green corn, and Mesquakie War Dance. These dances are deeply placed in the mind of Chief Dancer John Papakie.[1]

The features of the powwow have been varied and interesting. Often the Mesquakie team plays a team composed of members of visiting Indian tribes from several states that regularly attend the Tama Powwow. One year an Indian wedding ceremony was presented daily, revealing a truly beautiful bit of tribal ceremony. In 1832 a spectacular feature commemorating the 100th anniversary of the Black Hawk War was presented in pageant form. The Mesquakie reconstructed Black Hawk's village and re-enacted his war council, dances, and treaties. Other years there were such things as a greased pig contest, a ten-minute wrestling match, or a sham battle between Indians and a stagecoach. The latter included the capture, scalping, and burning at the stake of a white maiden--simulated, of course. Once there was a race between an Indian pony and a car. The race was a half-mile, and the driver was handicapped to the extent that he had to crank the car and get into the seat after the starting signal was given. Archery, foot races, pony races, and even high diving and life saving exhibitions have appeared on the powwow schedule

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[1]Ibid., p. 328.

of events. The baby contest is annually listed, prizes being given to the healthiest baby and the best dressed baby.[1]

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[1] Ibid., p. 331.

CHAPTER VII

INDIANS IN IOWA TODAY

There are more than five hundred Mesquakie Indians in Iowa today. Iowa is the cherished home of their ancestors. As a tribe, they own some 3,200 acres of land in the Iowa River valley in Tama County, purchased by the Indians with their own money. This is a collective farm--managed and cultivated by them--where they live, study and have their religious services. Many years ago Iowa gave them legal authority to own tribal land and property, and the title is held in trust for them. They pay taxes, and those who are qualified are voters.[1]

Nearly every family has a frame house, with perhaps a stove, a table, and a few chairs. However, many of them still have the wickiups like those their grandfathers used to live in. Part of the year the family lives in the wickiup, and the women cook in the kettle hung over a fire outside. Perhaps the patio and the outdoor cooking craze originated with the Indian.

The United States has built a fine school building and

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[1]Ruth A. Gallaher, "Tama Indians", The Palimpsest, Iowa City, Iowa (August, 1957), Vol. XXXVIII, pp. 333-335.

has tried to get the Indian children to go to school. The Indians haven't wanted their children to go to school to learn to be like the white people. So the government has made the building into a hospital. Here the Indians care for the sick Indians.

One day-school is now maintained at government expense with free lunches for the children. Instruction in these schools is in English, and during the year 1956-1957 ninety-seven were enrolled in grades one through six. In addition, fifty-two attended college. A Presbyterian missionary furnishes such religious instruction as the Indian will permit.

These Indians still have some ponies and dogs. A few have automobiles, which they call "fire wagons". They do little work on their land, but usually rent it to white farmers. They like to hunt and fish and lie under the trees better than they like to plow corn or shock grain.[1]

Today they have a genuinely democratic government; they elect a council of managers, and the council has a chief. The older tribesmen cling to the cherished tradition of the past, whereas the younger generation holds progress as their key word. Formerly about fifteen clans existed among the Mesquakie, such as the present Wolf, Bear, Thunder, Fox,

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[1]Bruce E. Mahan and Ruth A. Gallaher, Stories of Iowa for Boys and Girls (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1929), pp. 165-168.

Eagle, and Buffalo clans; whereas the Beaver, Tree, Sturgeon, and Fish are dying out. The younger generation is less interested in the variations of the rituals observed by the clan. There are about eighty unwritten clan songs, all memorized and sung in their regular order. The Mesquakie language is unwritten and taught only by word of mouth in the homes.

The Indian, like the country, have changed in some ways. Instead of a circle of buffalo-hide tepees, there is a circle of canvas tents, or of trailers. Nobody eats buffalo or deer meat, or wild fruits and roots in an Indian camp today. Instead, the people eat beefsteak, and bread from the grocery store, and canned fruits, and the children drink milk. The Iowa Indians do not go hunting for their food anymore. They work, like everyone else, to earn the money for their food. The Plains Indians do not receive any more help or money from the government than other farmers in the plains country.[1]

Sometimes an Indian boy has raised the best calf in his county, and Indian girls have won the contests in cooking, canning, and dressmaking at state and county fairs.

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[1]Alice Marriott, Indians On Horseback (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1949), p. 128.

Some of the Indian soldiers were killed in the war, and their families mourned for them as if they had been killed on raids in the old days. There were Indian girls in the WACS or WAVES or Army or Navy nurses, and their people were as proud of them as they were of the men who went away to fight.

These Indians in Iowa are trying hard to be like other Americans living in Iowa. The things they are keeping from their old way of life are the things that any people would be proud of, and would try to keep.

The Indian's clothing today is usually the kind worn by white people, but selected and modified to suit the Indian taste.

There is no historic tomahawk or blood-curdling war whoop in the Iowa camp today. The groves along the Iowa River reveal only peaceful scenes of everyday existence. It is a cramped existence and sometimes hard, compared with the old free life when they hunted and fished over Iowa--like that of an eagle sitting dejectedly in a cage--but to these Indians, Iowa is home.

CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY

The problem for this study has been to enlarge greatly on the present information about Indians available at the elementary level. To include human interest material that will catch the imagination of the student and arouse him to want to learn more about the subject. To improve on the general presentation of the story of the Indians in Iowa and the United States so that fully four times as much readable, historically accurate material becomes available.

The investigator surveyed the literature regarding the Indian in the United States and, most specifically, the Indian in Iowa. This survey included original source material, secondary material, and historical publications. Four Iowa museums were visited, and excursions were taken to three areas rich in Indian lore. The investigator visited Iowa Indians and New Mexico Indians at their respective reservations to determine current living conditions. The investigator, also, attended a music workshop to learn about Indian music.

After collecting data from the many sources, the investigator organized the information into chapters, written so the elementary classroom teacher would find these chapters an accessible source for teaching units about the Indian in Iowa.

The first home of the Plains Indians was on the plains, or steppes, of Siberia and northern Asia.

Many tribes of Indians lived in Iowa during our early history; others were moved into the state and out again by the government. Each of the Indian tribes had a leader or chief and many of these have figured prominently in our early history.

History reveals that it was the nature of the Indian to constantly be fighting. The Indians not only fought the white man, as many believe, but they fought among themselves. The Indian was at war more than he was at peace. However, the Indians did not band together in the common cause against the white man. The story of the Black Hawk War reveals that due to many of the chiefs and tribes favoring the white man, the cause and freedom of the Indian was soon lost. The Plains Indians did not fight chiefly to kill. They fought to defend their lands; to drive out intruders; and to show personal bravery.

On January 28, 1904, Congress passed a law setting aside enough money for the compiling and printing of all treaties then in the hands of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The Government printing office in Washington printed the two volumes on Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties. This was compiled in December 1, 1902. According to this publication, the one and only authentic list, there were many

treaties made between the Indian in Iowa and the Federal Government. Many of these treaties affected the Indian and ultimately moved him from our state.

The lives of the Indian were not made up exclusively of hunting and fighting. When there were no enemies around, and there was food in the tepee for everyone to eat, the men had time to make religious songs and ceremonies. Some of these songs are still sung; and some of the ceremonies, which were really prayers in the form of dances and songs. The Indian songs must be heard, felt and absorbed until they become a part of our thought and expression. When we sing them or hear them, we can appreciate the variety of tunes, the unique rhythms and their full significance and association with Indian life. When we sense this properly, we realize that music is the key to understanding the cultural ideas of the American Indian.

Medicine men had songs that were vitally important and these doctors were believed to have power over everything in Indian life.

Most of the time, the women were busy with work. The women tanned the hides that the men brought home from hunting, and cut and sewed the tepees and clothing from the tanned skins.

The children learned to do as their elders did, for

most of their games were imitative work. They played camping and hunting and fighting; and the little girls played with dolls and keeping house. There were other games, too. When it was too cold to go outdoors, they played games indoors such as cat's cradle of string.

Old men and women were the "rememberers" of their tribes. They kept the history of what happened in their minds, usually, for they had no way of writing. The use of sign language became a valuable means of inter-communication between the Indians.

If a visit were to be made to the Indians in Tama, Iowa, today, it would do no good to look among the trees for an Indian with his tomahawk. Nor will you hear the war whoop which Black Hawk and his warriors gave a hundred years ago.

The village is not at all warlike. The women cook in the kettle hung over a fire outside just part of the year. The children play among the frame houses or wickiups or down by the river. Some of the men raise corn, just like the white farmer. Many of the Indian children attend school, and even some attend college. It is not unusual for the Indian young people to marry and make their way out in the world, just as their white friends do. A Presbyterian missionary furnishes such religious instruction as the Indian will permit.

Some of the Indian soldiers were killed in the war,

and their families mourned for them as if they had been killed on raids in the old days. There were Indian girls in the WACS or WAVES or Army or Navy nurses, and their people were as proud of them as they were of the men who went away to fight.

These Indians in Iowa are trying hard to be like other Americans living in Iowa. Their clothing today is usually the kind worn by the white people, but selected and modified to suit the Indian taste.

These few Indians cannot remember the days when their people hunted all over Iowa, but their old men and women tell them the stories of long ago. As these stories are being told from the past, an automobile horn or a whistle of an engine on the Northwestern Railroad might bring them back to the present. The Indian is still in Iowa, but it is the Iowa of the white man.

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Twenty-eight songs collected by Charles Hofman in Wisconsin, 1946: Winnebago, Sioux, Zuni, and Acoma tribes. 6 10" discs. DISC Company of American album 161 (1515-1520).

SIOUX AND NAVAJO (Ethnic Music)

Twelve songs collected by Willard Rhodes in Indian communities for U. S. Indian Bureau: 4 10" discs. ETHNIC Folkways Library-P1401 (or long-playing disc P-401).

INDIAN ALBUM

Include Hopi dance songs, Winnebago song and other melodies played on the Indian flute; idealized Indian music in composition by MacDowell, Skilton and others. 4 10" discs. Victor album #-89. (RCA Victor Basic Record Library for Elementary Schools).